W. J. B. Cupeix

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Uwes

The Faith once delivered to the Saints.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT WORCESTER, MASS. OCT. 15, 1823,

AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. LOAMMI IVES HOADLY,

TO THE PASTORAL OFFICE

OVER THE

CALVINISTIC CHURCH AND SOCIETY IN THAT PLACE.

BY LYMAN BEECHER, D. D.

BOSTON:
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SERMON.

JUDE 3.

BELOVED, WHEN I GAVE ALL DILIGENCE TO WRITE UNTO YOU OF THE COMMON SALVATION, IT WAS NEEDFUL FOR ME TO WRITE UNTO YOU, AND EXHORT YOU THAT YE SHOULD EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH, WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

By the faith once delivered to the saints, is to be understood the doctrines of the gospel. These were delivered to the saints by holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The saints to whom they were delivered, were those who constituted the church under the Old dispensation, and the New.

The exhortation to contend for them earnestly, supposes that they would be powerfully assailed; and, yet, that they might be known and defended.

It is proposed, in this discourse, to give an epitome of what is supposed to be the faith delivered to the saints;—to state the reasons for believing it such;—and to point put the manner, in which it becomes the churches of our Lord to contend for it.

The faith once delivered to the saints included, it is believed, among other doctrines, the following:—

That men are free agents; in the possession of such faculties, and placed in such circumstances, as render it practicable for them to do whatever God requires; reasonable that he should require it; and fit that he should inflict, literally, the entire penalty of disobedience—such ability is here intended, as lays a perfect foundation for government by law, and for rewards and punishments according to deeds.

That the law of God requires love to God with all the heart, and impartial love for men; together with certain overt duties to God and men, by which this love is to be expressed; and that this law is supported by the sanctions of eternal life and eternal death.

That the ancestors of our race violated this law; that, in some way, as a consequence of their apostacy, all men, as soon as they become capable of accountable action, do, *of their own accord*, *most freely*, and *most wickedly*, withhold from God the *supreme love* and from man the *impartial love* which the law requires, beside violating many of its practical precepts: and that the obedience of the heart, which the law requires, has ceased entirely from the whole race of man.

That, according to the principles of moral government, obedience, either antecedent to transgression or subsequent, cannot avert the penalty of law; and that pardon, upon condition of repentance merely, would destroy the efficacy of moral government.

That an atonement has been made for sin by Jesus Christ; with reference to which God can maintain the influence of his law and forgive sin, upon condition of repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ:—that all men are invited sincerely, in this way to return to God, with an assurance of pardon and eternal life if they comply.

That a compliance with these conditions, is practicable, in the regular exercise of the powers and faculties given to man as an accountable creature; and is prevented only by the exercise of a voluntary, criminal aversion to God so inflexibly obstinate, that by motives merely men are never persuaded to repent and believe.

That God is able, by his Spirit, to make to the mind of man such an exhibition of the truth, as shall unfailingly convince him of sin, render him willing to obey the gospel, and actually and joyfully obedient.

That this special influence of the Holy Spirit is given according to the supreme discretion or good pleasure of God; and yet, ordinarily, is so inseparably associated with the use

of means by the sinner, as to create ample encouragement to attend upon them, and to render all hopes of conversion while neglecting or rejecting the truth, or while living in open sin, eminently presumptuous.

That believers are justified by the merits of Christ through faith; and are received into a covenant with God, which secures their continuance in holiness forever;—while those, who die in their sins, will continue to sin wilfully, and to be punished justly for ever.

That God exercises a providential government; which extends to all events in such a manner, as to lay a just foundation for resignation to him in afflictions brought upon us by the wickedness of men, and for gratitude in the reception of good in all the various modes of human instrumentality—that all events shall illustrate his glory and be made subservient to the good of his kingdom—and that this government is administered, in accordance with a purpose or plan, known and approved of by him from the beginning.

Finally, that the God of the universe has revealed himself to us as existing in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; possessing distinct and equal attributes, and in some unrevealed manner so united as to constitute *one God.*

These are the doctrines, which, it is believed, were delivered to the saints, and which have been held substantially, though with some variety of modification, by the true church of God in all ages. To prevent circumlocution, I shall, in this discourse, call them *the Evangelical System,* and for the same reason, I shall call the opposite *the Liberal System.**

It has been common to support these doctrines by the quotation of proof texts. But to these a different exposition is given more reasonable, it is said, and carrying with it a higher probability of truth; which leads to critical exposi-

* I choose to call these doctrines the evangelical system, not only because I believe them to be the Gospel; but because no man, or denomination, has held them so exclusively, as to render it proper to designate them by the name of an individual or a sect. It is a select system, which some of almost every denomination hold, and some reject; and which ought to be characterised by some general term indicative of the system as held in all ages and among all denominations of Christians.

tion, and opens a wide field for evasion and creates perplexity and indecision.

My design at present is to avail myself of collateral evidence only, with the view of attempting to decide in this way which is the correct exposition of the proof texts the evangelical or the liberal exposition.

For the sake of argument, we shall suppose the evidence from exposition to be on each side exactly balanced, and proceed to lay into the scale of evangelical exposition those arguments which seem to furnish evidence of its correctness. I observe, then,

I. That the doctrines of the evangelical system are in accordance with the most direct and obvious meaning of the sacred text. By *obvious meaning*, I intend that, which is actually suggested, without note or comment to the minds of honest and unlettered men. That the proof texts teach the doctrines of the evangelical system in this manner, is alleged by learned infidels as a reason for rejecting the inspiration of the Bible; by Unitarian commentators and writers, as a reason for restraining, modifying and turning aside the text; and by Critics, who translate or expound without reference to theological opinions. No translators have been able to maintain a reputation for classical literature, and to sink in a translation the obvious meaning below, and bring up the philosophical meaning upon the surface.* The editors of the "Improved Version" have manifested as much good will, with as little conscience, in the attempt, as has ever appeared; and yet have been compelled to allow the proof texts, in most instances, to speak the offensive doctrines, and to content themselves with a simple contradiction of them in notes and comments. Interpretation according to the obvious import has resulted always in the evangelical system; while expositors according to the supposed rational and philosophical mode of exposition have differed indefinitely. It is not the evangelical, but the liberal rule of interpretation, which has

* This fact shows, that these remarks are as applicable to the original text, as to the translation; for surely, if the evangelical were not the obvious import in the original, nothing would be easier than to give a literal translation, which should leave them out of sight entirely.

filled the world with divers doctrines, perplexity and doubt. *All* versions, and all expositions according to the obvious meaning, of whatever country or age, do substantially agree in the evangelical system; and agree with the understanding of mankind at large who read the Bible. The Bible, for the most part, was written also by men, who understood language only according to its obvious import;—and for the use of men, to whom it must have been a sealed book upon any other principle of interpretation. Add to this, the testimony of the Bible to its own plainness: that it can be read by him that runs; and understood by the wayfaring man though a fool; that it is a lamp to the path; that it furnishes the man of God thoroughly; that it is profitable for doctrine; that it is able to make wise to salvation; that it creates obligation to know the truth and renders error inexcusable. Now if the obvious meaning of the proof texts be not the true one; and if the true meaning be one which can be seen only by men of classical and philosophical vision; then the common people have *no Bible*. For the book itself teaches *them* nothing; and the critical expositions of uninspired men are not a revelation. The character of God is also implicated, as having practised on his subjects a most deplorable deception; as having taught them falsehood in their own tongue, and the truth in an unknown tongue; as having required them to abhor, upon pain of his eternal displeasure, what he has taught them, by the only import of terms which they can comprehend; and to love and obey what he has not taught them, by any import of language, which they can possibly comprehend. Was the glorious God ever more scandalised than by such an imputation? We have heard of his having made a great part of mankind on purpose to damn them, and of his sending to hell helpless victims for the nonperformance of impossibilities; and, if such were indeed his character and conduct, I know not what other Bible we could expect, than one impossible to be understood and framed to deceive. But on this subject, we adopt the language of a distinguished advocate of the liberal system. "It is impossible that a teacher of infinite wisdom should expose those, whom he would teach, to

infinite error. He will rather urpass all other instructors in bringing down truth to our apprehension. A revelation is a gift of light; it cannot thicken and multiply our perplexities."*

2. It is the uniform testimony of the Bible, that the righteous love the truth; and that the wicked are opposed to it.

If then, we can decide who are the wicked, in the Scriptural sense, which system they approve, and which they oppose; we have an inspired decision which is the faith delivered to the saints. But the Scriptures have decided that irreligious and profane persons are wicked men;—and that all persons of confirmed vicious habits, liars, drunkards, thieves, adulterers, and all the impure are wicked men. They have placed in the same class the ambitious, who love the praise of men more than the praise of God; and the voluptuous, who love pleasure more than God. Now that some of this description of sinners are found under both systems, is admitted; but which system do they, as a body, prefer; and against which do they manifest unequivocal hostility. It requires no proof but universal observation to support the position; that the irreligious, immoral and voluptuous part of the community prefer the liberal system, and are vehement in their opposition to the evangelical system.† If this assertion needs confirmation; assemble the pleasure-loving and licentious community of the world:—the patrons of balls and theatres and masquerades:—and let the doctrines of the evangelical system be preached plainly to them. Would they be pleased with them? Would they endure them? Do this class of the community, where their numbers or influence preponderate, any where, in the wide world, settle and support an evangelical minister; and if they support the preaching of any

* Channing's Sermon, second Baltimore Ed. pp. 12, 13.

† The reader will observe, that we do not say, nor do we believe it to be true, that all, or even the majority, who professedly embrace the liberal system, are wicked in the sense explained. We know, and we gladly embrace the opportunity to acknowledge, that there are among them many whose talents and learning, whose amiable and generous dispositions, and whose devotedness to the public good, on many accounts deserve our respect and commendation. There are, in this class of the community, many whom we not only respect and esteem, but whom, as connexions and friends we tenderly love. Our assertion is that those who are wicked, in the Scripture sense of that term, do, as a body, whatever preaching they attend, and with whatever denomination they are classed, dislike the doctrines of the evangelical faith and prefer those of the liberal system.

system of doctrines, is it not substantially the liberal system? Go to the voluntary evening association, for conference and prayer; and which system will you hear breathed out in supplication? Then go to the voluntary evening association for gambling or inebriation, and which system with its patrons, will you hear loaded with execration and ridicule? When a division is made in a town or parish, by the settlement of a minister of liberal or evangelical opinions; which side do a majority of the pious take, if there be on earth any such thing as piety manifested by credible evidence; and which side do the wicked take, if there be on earth any such class of persons as wicked men—proved to be such by their deeds. If a majority is obtained against evangelical opinions, was it ever known to be done, by the most pious and moral part of the community, in opposition to the suffrages of the most irreligious and flagitious? There is, then, some powerful cause, of universal operation, which arrays the irreligious part of the community against the evangelical system. But, according to the bible, of two opposing systems, one of which must be true, that which the wicked approve is false, and that which they oppose and hate is true;—"for he that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

3. The Evangelical System produces the same effects universally, as were produced by the faith delivered to the saints.

The maxim, that *the same cause, in the same circumstances, will produce the same effect*, is as true in the moral as in the natural world: the laws of mind, and the operation of moral causes, being just as uniform as the laws of matter. The Gospel, the greatest moral cause which ever operated in the world, is the same now as in the apostolic age; and the heart of man, civilized or uncivilized, is also the same. So that this great cause is operating now, precisely in the same circumstances as it did in the primitive age;—for the heart of man is the moral world, and is the same now as then. If there be a system of doctrines then, at the present time, whose effects universally are the same

with those produced by the faith once delivered to the saints; that system demonstrably, *is the faith* which was once delivered to the saints. Identity of moral effect, proves identity of moral cause.

The illustration of the argument from effects must consist of many particulars, and of matters of fact. The argument, therefore, can only be stated concisely, without attempting to answer every possible objection. The facts, too, may be regarded by some as invidious. I have only to say that no fact will be stated, as such, which is not believed to be notoriously true, and, if denied, capable of unequivocal proof; and as to the invidious bearing of matters of fact, or of arguments, I am persuaded it is both a false delicacy and an unsound cause, which would shrink from this test, and shield itself under forms of alleged decorum. But I must be allowed to believe, also, that no real decorum is violated by the statement of facts or the pressure of arguments, where the object is important, the design honest, and the manner sober and respectful. Systems of religion, as well as of natural philosophy, may be brought to the test of actual experiment. "By their fruits shall ye know them" But if the moral world were by the laws of decorum closed against us; and we might only theorise without, upon practical tendencies, and not enter it to collect and appeal to facts; we might contend earnestly, but certainly should contend to very little purpose. To the word and testimony of God and to matters of fact we appeal.

We observe then that the evangelical system occasions the same objections precisely now, which were occasioned by the faith once delivered to the saints.

Such an exhibitiion was given of old of the particular Providence of God, as occasioned, on the part of thieves, and liars, and adulterers, and idolaters, the extenuating plea, "We are delivered to do all these abominations."* God governs the moral world by such irresistible influence, that crimes are as much a matter of physical necessity as rain and

* Jer. vii, 10.

sunshine. Do I need to say to this audience, that the charge constantly urged against the Decrees of God, as an article of the evangelical system, is, that it destroys accountable agency, and makes men machines, and all actions necessary by an irresistible fatality. The faith of the saints then and the evangelical faith are perverted in this article exactly alike.

The ancient faith included an article which led the wicked among the Jews to extenuate their crimes by the allegation, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge;"* i. e. Sin in man is a physical property, transmitted from father to son, as bones and sinews are, and alike inconsistent with choice or blame.

And is not the objection, urged against the doctrine of *Original Sin*, as contained in the evangelical system, the same? The inspired answer to the objection of old was, That children are accountable only for their own voluntary exercises and deeds; and this is the reply returned now by the patrons of the evangelical system.

The degree of human Depravity as taught in the Bible, led the people in a time of great wickedness, to say, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them and die, how should we then live?"† i. e. If we be dead in sin, to the exclusion of all spiritual life, how can we be free agents, and how can we help ourselves, or be to blame?—and as if they had been told by the prophet, that their death in sin was voluntary and criminal, though entire and certain in its efficacy; they seem to say, Well, if we are so wicked, then, that we certainly shall pine away and die in our sins, how can we be to blame? If we shall not turn of ourselves, how can we turn; and of what use is ability, that will never be exerted. Now are not these precisely the objections which are at this day alleged, constantly, against the doctrines of man's entire Depravity, and moral Inability, as articles of the evangelical system.

Our Savior asserts the necessity of some great change to qualify a man for the kingdom of heaven; which, to a ruler

* Ezek. xviii, 2. † Ezek. xxxiii, 10.

in Israel, appeared mysterious and even impossible. And is there not a great change insisted on in the evangelical system as indispensable to salvation; to which masters in Israel now, confess, that they are strangers; and which they regard as impossible without the destruction of free-agency and accountability?

The manner of a sinner's justification was delivered to the saints, in such terms, as occasioned the objection, that it made void the law: superseding the obligations and motives to a moral life, and leading to licentiousness. "Do we then make void the law through faith?" "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" And is not this precisely the objection which has been urged against the doctrine of Justification by faith, as contained in the evangelical system, from the time of the Reformation to this day.

The saints were taught something concerning the sovereignty of God, as having mercy on whom he would; and punishing whom he would;—which produced the objection, "Why then doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will? If wicked men receive their destination as God appoints; why does he blame them. If it be his will that they perish; and they do perish, are they not obedient; and why does he find fault?" And is not this the objection, which is urged unceasingly against the doctrine of Election, as taught in the evangelical system? To our reply, that the will of God, as a moral rule to man, and the will of God as a rule of administration to himself in disposing of rebels, are distinct; the answer is, "Metaphysics! metaphysics! The will of God is the will of God; and if sinners *in any sense* act in accordance with any will of God, they are obedient; and he has no cause to find fault." Now did the liberal exposition of the ninth of Romans ever produce, in the whole history of man, the objection which it produced from the lips of Paul, and still produces as explained by evangelical ministers? Or did it ever produce from liberal lips, the reply, "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"—We have only to say, that the Apostle's answer to the objection is the same, which evangelical men have always returned, "Who art thou, O man, that re-

pliest against God?" Shall a being of yesterday arraign the conduct of his Maker? Shall a rebel sit in judgment upon his God? Are not men rebels, justly doomed to die; and, in reference to their character and condition as condemned criminals, all clay of the same lump? And is not the discretion of God to pardon or reprieve as absolute as that of the potter over his clay, to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor? Do you object that the punishment threatened is unjust? But how could God make a vessel of *mercy* of one whose punishment would be unjust; or a vessel of *wrath* of one whose punishment would be undeserved? Do you call men impotent because I have compared them to clay; or assert that the sovereignty of God, in saving some, *causes* and renders unavoidable the destruction of them that perish? *They* perish for their crimes against law, who might have been executed without offers of pardon. *They* perish, who are able to accept the terms of pardon, *for* rejecting them. Nor are they cut down in haste. With much long suffering they are endured, while by despising the riches of the goodness of God, they fit themselves for destruction. Such is the evangelical reply; and such as we understand his language and argument, is the reply of Paul.

It was objected to the Gospel and conceded in the early age, that, few embraced it but the poor, and the common people. To the poor the Gospel is preached. Have any of the Scribes and Pharisees believed on him? The common people heard him gladly. Not many wise men after the flesh—not many mighty not many noble are called. Celsus, in the second century, exults in the fact, that so few in the higher classes of society had professed christianity, and pours contempt upon the cause as patronized only by mechanics and vulgar people.*

Now is it not notorious that the liberal system of doctrines, unpatronized by the civil power, has never been the religion of the common people in any country; but rather the religion of men of philosophical minds and literary habits: i. e. the

* Are there no attempts making to create an impression now, that the liberal system is patronized peculiarly by persons in high life, by men of taste and talents, of wealth and refinement, and that the opposite system is fast going down, to be the religion of the common people only and the poor?

evangelical system has been patronized chiefly by that class of society, which patronized the faith delivered to the saints; while the oposite system has relied for patronage more commonly on the arm of government, and that class of men in society who as a body rejected the gospel. A late writer of high reputation on the liberal side in this country says, "It is not to be doubted that, throughout our country, a very large proportion of those men, who for their talents and learning and virtues, have the most influence in the community, and have it in their power to do the most towards giving a right direction to the public feeling and the public sentiment, are dissatisfied with the Calvinistic and Trinitarian form, in which they have had religion presented to them; but are prevented from making a public avowal of their opinions, by an unwillingness to encounter opposition, and obloquy, and loss of confidence, and the power of being useful."* The evangelical system in this country is embraced then, by the same classes extensively, which embraced the Gospel; and is extensively disapproved by that class of men who rejected the Gospel

The faith delivered to the Saints occasioned a virulent hatred. It was not hatred of it as false, arising from an ardent love of truth. For Pharisees and Sadducees could tolerate each other; and Pagans could tolerate thirty thousand gods, with all their lust and blood.

And is not the evangelical system encountered by a virulence of opposition, in circumstances which show that it cannot arise from the love of truth or hatred of error. None will pretend that the effects of the evangelical system are as deplorable as the effects of idolatry in its present forms. The evangelical system has produced no temple of impure resort; no gratifications of lust enjoined as acts of worship, no blood of human victims; no burning of widows or drowning infants; no self-inflicted penal tortures. And yet such is the hatred of many to the evangelical system, that they oppose deliberately, all attempts to extend it to the heathen; and on the ground avowedly, that they had rath-

* Dr. Ware's letters to Trinitarians and Calvinists, pp. 146, 147.

er they would remain as they are than to adopt the evangelical system. In the face of all the absurdity and obscenity and blood of idolatry, not a few have declared, that they would not lift a finger to convert the whole pagan world to the evangelical faith, or words to that effect. They speak kindly of infidels, Mahometans and pagans, and fiercely of all which breathes the Spirit of the evangelical system. Such asperity, the faith delivered to the saints occasioned: and such asperity the evangelical system occasions.

The faith delivered to the saints produced a stricter morality than any cotemporaneous system. Whether this be true of the evangelical system is not to be decided by a comparison of the best characters on one side with the most defective on the other; or of individuals of acknowledged moral purity on both sides, of which it is admitted there are many.* Nor can the moral efficacy of the two systems be decided by the standard of public morality, where the evangelical system has prevailed in the early period of life and exerted its influence upon the conscience, and in the formation of moral habits; or where it still prevails to such an extent, as to exert a powerful modifying influence; and especially where the opposite system is of but recent public notoriety and of limited extent. Great moral causes do not produce their effects immediately; nor, upon every individual, exactly the same effect. Their tendency and efficacy is to be looked for in those communities, where the influence of the two systems has been the most unmingled and of the longest duration; and also in those obvious changes in a community, which, as one or the other prevails, become apparent. With these explanations in view, I remark that the superior moral efficacy of the evangelical system is a matter of unequivocal concession. In an article on predestination in the British Encyclopedia, written, it is said, by Robert Forsyth, Esq , a learned civilian, and an infidel, after giving an account of the Calvinistic and Arminian system, and the preference to the latter it is said, "There is one remark which we think ourselves in justice

* We desire all that is said on this subject to be understood with the same explanation which we have made on p. 8.

bound to make: It is this, that, from the earliest ages down to our own days, if we consider the character of the ancient stoics, the Jewish Essenes, the modern Calvinists, and Jansenists, compared with that of their antagonists the Epicurians, the Sadducees, the Arminians and the Jesuits; we shall find that they have excelled in no small degree in the practice of the most rigid and respectable virtues, and have been the highest honor to their own age, and the best models for imitation to every succeeding age." This is the testimony of a philosopher to the different moral effects of the two systems, from the time of Augustine at least to the present day.

Dr. Priestly, whose partiality for the evangelical system will not be suspected, says, that those who hold the evangelical doctrines "have less apparent conformity to the world and seem to have more of a real principle of religion." He says also, "Though Unitarian dissenters are not apt to entertain any doubt of the truth of their principles, they do not lay so much stress upon them as other Christians do upon theirs. Nor indeed is there any reason why they should, when they do not consider the holding of them to be at all necessary to salvation. They therefore, take much less pains to make proselytes, and are less concerned to inculcate their principles upon their children, their servants, and their dependents in general. From this principle it is, that great numbers, becoming Unitarians in the church of England, and even among the clergy, do not feel the impropriety and absurdity to say nothing more harsh, of continuing to countenance a mode of worship, which, if they were questioned about it, they would not deny to be according to their own principles, idolatrous and blasphemous. Such persons also having no zeal for speculative religion, merely because they have no zeal for religion in general; their moral conduct, though decent is not what is deemed strict and exemplary."*

In a periodical publication of high literary character, but of decided and known partiality to infidel opinions,† we find

* Discourses on various subjects, pp. 95, 96.

† Edinburgh Review.

the following statements. "Predestination, or doctrines much inclining towards it, have, on the whole, prevailed in the Christian churches of the west since the days of Augustine and Aquinas. Who were the first formidable opponents of these doctrines in the church of Rome? The Jesuits,—the contrivers of courtly casuistry, and the founders of lax morality. Who, in the same church, inclined to the stern theology of Augustine? The Jansenists,—the teachers and the models of austere morals. What are we to think of the morality of Calvinistic nations, especially the most numerous classes of them, who seem, beyond all other men, to be most zealously attached to their religion, and most deeply penetrated with its spirit? Here, if any where, we have a practical and decisive test of the moral influence of a belief in necessarian opinions. In Protestant Switzerland, in Holland, in Scotland, among the English Nonconformists and the Protestants of the North of Ireland, and in the New-England States, Calvinism was long the prevalent faith, and is probably still the faith of a considerable majority. Their moral education was at least completed, and their collective character formed, during the prevalence of Calvinistic opinions. Yet where are communities to be found of a more pure and active virtue?"

The accusations brought against evangelical writers and professors, as requiring too much, or making no sufficient allowance for the weakness of human nature; as rigid, austere, enemies to innocent amusements; as setting themselves up as better than their neighbors; as righteous over much; are also concessions in point; as are also the topics of ridicule having reference as they do to the fastidious strictness of our ancestors and of evangelical professors; to which we may add the invidious names given to them of Puritan, Methodist, &c. To all this it may be added, that, sound morality has never in any country or age been so elevated, and so extensively prevalent as in those communities where the evangelical doctrines have been most universally believed, and most diligently taught, in families and schools, and in the sanctuary.

It has been said I am sensible, that, these salutary effects of the evangelical system are produced by the truths contained in it in common with the liberal system, and in spite of the errors it embraces, and not *by* them. Does the truth, then, mingled with absurdity and falsehood, produce better effects than the truth simple and undefiled as in the liberal system it is claimed to be. If it is the truth held in common by the evangelical and liberal systems, which produces these good effects, why does not the liberal system alone produce the same effects. Allow me to suggest another solution.

The evangelical system *requires* a stricter morality, enforced by more powerful motives. It adopts as its rule, the moral law, unmitigated; and its sanctions of eternal life and death. A law which the opposite system regards as too strict, and as set aside or mitigated in accommodation to human frailty; and whose sanctions are regarded as nothing;—or as a salutary temporary discipline;—or as annihilation;—or as a matter of entire uncertainty. Now is it strange that lax requisitions, and feeble uncertain sanctions, do not produce the strict and vigorous morality of the law of God. What would human laws avail, should expositors and judges say, "Men are too wicked to allow of our interpreting the laws strictly. They must not be understood to mean exactly what they say, or to threaten exactly what they speak." Perfect honesty, or truth, or purity is not to be expected; a little fraud, and theft, and perjury, and violence they allow, in accommodation to human weakness; and threaten the *greater crimes* with *no punishment*, or only a beneficial temporary discipline, or exile from the state, or—we know not what.

Again, the evangelical system produces the best attendance on the public worship of God; and, of course, if the moral tendency of each were the same, that would produce the strictest morality, which commanded most extensively and deeply the attention of men. That the doctrines of the evangelical system do this, is claimed by Witherspoon as true in his day in Scotland; and by Overton as true in England, and is admitted by Unitarian writers, and denied by no one.

It is also admitted in this country recently, as a matter of notoriety "which none will question." It is accounted for, it must be acknowledged, in a way not favorable to the moral tendency of evangelical sentiments. It is on the ground of the intolerable strictness of liberal preaching; so strict and terrifying, that few, besides the more pious and exemplary, can abide it. The whole pleasure-loving, voluptuous and dissipated community being driven panic-struck, by Unitarian denunciation to the horns of the altar in evangelical churches; where, by "smooth preaching," and the hope of impunity in sin, their fears may be allayed, and their consciences quieted.

The faith delivered to the saints produced Revivals of religion.

The preaching of it was attended with sudden anxieties, and deep convictions of sin, and sudden joy in believing; followed by reformation and a holy life. Nor was this the effect of miracles, or itself a miraculous event in the common acceptation of the term. Miracles, merely, produced no such effects. It was under the preaching of the word, that men were pricked in their hearts, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" And it was by the moral transformation, which attended the apostolic answer to this question, and not by the power of miracles, that the Gospel defied opposition, and spread during the first three hundred years. There was no resisting it. Conviction attended the word; and a joyful obedience to the faith followed. The very chiefs of opposition, exchanged their weapons of annoyance for the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit.

And do not the same convictions of sin attend the preaching of the evangelical system; and does it not extend its victories in the same manner? By argument merely we convince few, and reclaim none. But there is an efficacy in evangelical preaching on the conscience and on the heart; against which nor learning, nor talents, nor prejudice, nor wrath itself, afford effectual protection. Multitudes who virulently hated, and verily thought that they ought to oppose, evangelical doctrines, and revivals of religion, have been con-

vinced of their mistake, and sin; and have embraced joyfully the doctrines, which they reviled. Many, who preach the liberal system, can bear witness that they have lost, in this way, again and again, the very pillars of their societies. Defections of the same kind are frequent still, and clothe evangelical doctrines and revivals of religion with a terrifying power.

The faith delivered to the saints was efficacious in the sudden reformation of those who had been long under the dominion of vicious habits.

The apostle enumerates the habits of crime, which prevailed among pagans; and, then writing to the church of Corinth, says, "And such were some of you." But, while the liberal system despairs, professedly, of any sudden reformation from vicious habits, as against the established laws of the moral world; and is unable to produce an instance in which a vicious person has been reformed, by *abandoning the evangelical and adopting the liberal system;* and, while reformation from vicious habits, is a rare event, if it exist at all, under liberal preaching, it is a frequent event for profligates, on *abandoning their confidence in the liberal system and adopting the evangelical, to manifest a most salutary and abiding change of character and conduct.* In almost all the revivals of religion, which are now prevailing in our land, there are some to whom it may be said, "And such were some of you, but ye are washed," &c.

Dr. Chalmers' who preached the liberal system twelve years, and after this the evangelical, says, "And here I cannot but record the effect of an actual though undesigned experiment, which I prosecuted for upwards of twelve years among you. For the greater part of that time, I could expatiate on the meanness of dishonesty, on the villany of falsehood, on the despicable arts of calumny,—in a word, upon all those deformities of character, which awaken the natural indignation of the human heart against the pests and the disturbers of human society. Even at this time I certainly did press the reformations of honor, and truth, and integrity among my people; but I never once heard of any

such reformations having been effected amongst them. If there was any thing at all brought about in this way, it was more than ever I got any account of. I am not sensible, that all the vehemence with which I urged the virtues and the proprieties of social life, had the weight of a feather on the moral habits of my parishioners. And it was not till I got impressed by the utter alienation of the heart in all its desires and affections from God; it was not till reconciliation to Him became the distinct and the prominent object of my ministerial exertions; it was not till I took the scriptural way of laying the method of reconciliation before them; it was not till the free offer of forgiveness through the blood of Christ was urged upon their acceptance, and the Holy Spirit given through the channel of Christ's mediatorship to all who ask him, was set before them as the unceasing object of their dependance and their prayers; it was not, in one word, till the contemplations of my people were turned to these great and essential elements in the business of a soul providing for its interest with God, and the concerns of its eternity, that I ever heard of any of those subordinate reformations which I aforetime made the earnest and the zealous, but I am afraid at the same time, the ultimate object of my earlier ministrations."*

The faith delivered to the saints produced a spirit of missions.

On the day of Pentecost the number of disciples was one hundred and twenty. And on that day the scales of Jewish prejudice fell from their eyes; and the spirit of missions descended upon their hearts; and, in three hundred years, without colleges, or theological seminaries, or the press, or governmental aid; but, in opposition to its dire hostility, they evangelized the world. And are not the great movements, now making to evangelize the world, conducted chiefly under the auspices, and by the charities of those, who adopt substantially the evangelical system. Are not all the denominations in the world, who believe in the Divinity

* Chalmers' Farewell Discourse addressed to his parishioners of Kilmany in his series of Discourses, pp. 110, 111, 112.

of Christ and his Atonement, in the depravity of man and his need of a moral renovation by the spirit, and in the doctrine of Justification by faith and future eternal punishment, more or less engaged in the work of missions; and is there in the wide world a denomination which rejects these doctrines, that is thus engaged. And is this system, which does nothing to evangelize the world, the Gospel; and that, which does all that is done in accordance with the efforts of the primitive church, another Gospel?

The faith delivered to the saints produced a piety of great solemnity, ardor and decision.

It was a piety, which took delight in the public worship of God, and in private frequent association for religious conference and prayer: a piety, which included a deep solicitude, and made vigorous exertions, for the conversion of sinners, and experienced peculiar joy in the event: a piety, which espoused openly the cause of Christ, encountered obloquy and the loss of all things, and stood undaunted in the face of danger and produced joy unspeakable in the hour of death.

And is not this, precisely the same cast of piety, which the evangelical system does, and which the liberal system does not, produce? Is not the deeply serious cast of the one regarded as constituting the evangelical, a gloomy religion; and the lighter cast of the other as giving to it vastly the preference on the score of cheerfulness? Is not the ardor of the one, stigmatized as enthusiasm; and the cool, deliberate, intellectual cast of the other regarded as giving to it the enviable preeminence of a rational religion? Does not the one delight in, and the other deprecate, frequent voluntary associations for religious conference and prayer? The one ridicule the supposed work of sudden conversion by the spirit of God; and the other hold it in the highest estimation? Do not the converts to the one system, as far as they are called to it, disregard obloquy, and endure persecution? While, "Throughout our country, a very large proportion of those men, who, for their talents and learning and virtues, have the most influence in the community, are dissatisfied with the

Trinitarian and Calvinistic form, in which they have had religion presented to them; but are *prevented from making a public avowal of their opinions by an unwillingness to encounter opposition and obloquy, and loss of confidence, and the power of being useful.*"—Are the sentiments which these men, "*all over our country,*" are supposed to prefer to the evangelical system, *The faith once delivered to the saints;* which, in the primitive church, produced a love to Jesus Christ so ardent, an avowal of his doctrine so undaunted, and an enterprize so efficient, as moved onward from conquering to conquer, through good report and evil, through honor and dishonor, through fire and blood? Alas! how, is the gold become dim, and the fine gold changed?—But is it so? Is that the primitive faith, which produces none of those consequences; and is that another and an opposite faith, which produces them all?

With respect to the manner in which cordial believers in the two systems die, we have only to say, that generally, professors of religion of evangelical opinions who have in life adorned their profession, approach their last hour without fear and with great composure of mind, and with cheerful resignation. In some instances they, even as the apostle Paul did, desire to depart and be with Christ; and not unfrequently their views and affections and anticipations of glory render them exceedingly joyful in the last hour. Now we ask, and refer for an answer to every man's observation, Is this the manner in which liberal opinions enable those to die who cordially embrace them. If some of this description meet death without fear, are not far greater numbers terrified at his approach? If some are tranquil, are not more agitated? If some manifest resignation, do not a far greater number cling with unyielding grasp to life, or manifest only the resignation of necessity? And are there any, who, by the liberal system are inspired with such love for Christ as to desire earnestly to depart and be with him: and especially are there any whose views and affections and anticipations of glory render their death bed a scene of the most exalted joy?

The faith delivered to the saints, was attended from the beginning to the end with an unwavering confidence of its truth.

False christs and false prophets arose; but they could not "deceive the elect." Winds of false doctrine blew, but they scattered only the chaff; some also made shipwreck of the faith; but it was not the saints. There were heresies, early; and it was needful that there should be, that they which were approved might be manifest. And they were manifest; for the last Apostle that remained testified, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us." But to those, who adhered to the faith, he said, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things."*—i. e. You know the truth of all those doctrines which some have rejected.

It is admitted, that some patrons of the evangelical system abandon it. But it will not be denied, that, as a general fact, they hold the same system of truth to the end; modified, explained, and proved, with some variation; but the same system undeniably.

But can it be said of the patrons of the liberal system, as a body, that their system, first and last, is the same. Can it be said of an individual scarcely, that he continues to embrace the same system through life. Dr. Priestly has told us that he was first a Calvinist; and that he successively embraced and abandoned, in his way downward to low Socinianism, all the intervening systems; and did not know how long he should maintain his existing faith, or what would come next. The same course has been travelled over by liberal critics and learned expositors in Germany and in this country, it is begun, it is believed, by most, and completed by many, who adopt the liberal system.

Now is it not notorious that evangelical men are reproached, as being singularly confident, that they only are right; and that Unitarians profess to have arrived at certainty *chiefly* in

* 1 John ii, 19, 20.

respect to the *falsehood of the evangelical system;* while, in relation to their own, there are many points on which they have not *had time* to make up their minds; and concerning which, with *other wise and great and good men,* they continue to doubt. Indeed, it might appear unseemly for men, who had discovered that four out of five of their systems of belief, deliberately adopted, were wrong, to entertain a very high opinion of the powers of their own reason, at least, or to be confident of the truth of their fifth or sixth opinion in respect to the great points of revealed doctrine. But where among these changing men, ever learning their *past errors*, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth; where is that unction from the Holy One which the saints possessed, and its attendant knowledge of all things.*

4. A departure from the faith delivered to the saints, producing divisions in the church, was denominated a heresy during the three first centuries.

This does not prove those doctrines to be false which the churches condemned, because churches and councils are not infallible. But it does prove the opinions denominated heretical, to be novelties, and in opposition to the received opinion of the church until the time of their existence. The declaration of the primitive church that a doctrine is a heresy, is a public formal testimony, as to what had been until then, the received opinion of the churches.

* A writer of eminence, in a sermon from 1 Cor. xiii, 10, delivered at an ordination,† assumes without any attempt at exposition, or proof, that even the Apostles *knew but in part:* from which has resulted "diversity of opinion," and the fact, that, though of two opposite opinions, both cannot be true; "they may both be innocent:" and that this imperfection of knowledge may have been designed, "as a moral discipline," and "to give a larger scope, and new occasion, for the exercise of good feeling." It certainly would have been relevant and desirable, that it should have been ascertained whether this *conceded ignorance* of the apostles, respected doctrinal knowledge, or only experimental knowledge, begun in time, and to be consummated in heaven; the *latter*, seeming to be the subject of discourse, and not at all the former. Whether their *partial ignorance* of Christian doctrine, had respect to a *partial revelation* of the doctrines of Christianity, or to the doctrines which are revealed: If it respected revealed doctrines, whether their *ignorance* was owing to their indolence, or incapacity to understand, or to such obscurity in the revelation of them, that even apostles could understand only a part of the doctrines which God had revealed. We cannot but admire, if it were partial doctrinal knowledge, which is conceded by the Apostles, how they should have drawn inferences from the fact, so directly opposed to those which were drawn by this writer. The one, inferring charity and moderation; the other, the duty of contending earnestly for the faith. The one anathematising any man, or even an angel, who should preach any other gospel; and the other, inferring from the same premises, the equal innocence of doctrinal truth and doctrinal falsehood.

† *Dr. Ware's Sermon delivered at the ordination of the Rev. William B. O. Peabody, at Springfield,* 1820.

The heretics themselves, admitted sometimes, that their opinions were novel, but nevertheless true; or more commonly, so explained them, as to claim that they were not a departure from the received faith. Uniting of course, the testimony of heretics, to that of the church, as to what had been the received opinion.

From the nature, then, and the known æra of the several heresies in the primitive church, we may ascertain what was the antecedent faith of the church, on the points to which they relate.

The doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ was, then, the received opinion of the church, when denied by the Gnostics, towards the close of the first century. The Divinity of Christ when denied by Arius A. D. 315. Soon after which, it was condemned as a heresy, in a council of 380 Fathers. The doctrines of original sin, entire depravity, regeneration by special grace, and justification by faith, continued to be the received doctrines of the church until the time of Pelagius about A. D. 400.

The doctrines of the evangelical system, then, commenced their journey down to us from the apostolic age: and as each doctrine of the liberal system encountered any one of them, *that*, was declared by the church to be a novelty, and the other the antecedently received opinion of the church. Can this fact be reconciled with the supposition that the liberal system, was the faith *first* delivered to the saints? Did all the churches from the beginning, misunderstand the import of the Gospels and epistles; and all the apostolic expositions of them; and misunderstand systematically wrong; and exactly alike, on all points; and in direct opposition to what Jesus Christ and the Apostles intended to teach; and this too, without concert, and throughout the Roman Empire? Or if the liberal was the system first delivered to the saints, could all the churches have exchanged it for the opposite system, so early, so silently, so unitedly, as to have the *whole truth* regarded as a novelty and denounced as a heresy in the second and third and fourth centuries. Dr. Priestly has attempted to show that the liberal system was that which was

actually delivered by Christ and his Apostles to the saints, and that such a change as we have supposed, did happen in the progress of two or three hundred years. But beside the utter failure of his proof, he might as well have attempted to show, that the course of all the rivers in the Roman Empire was reversed during the three first centuries of the Christian æra, in opposition to the testimony of all the historians and naturalists of the empire, convened by public authority, on purpose to inquire into the matter of fact.

5. It is a point decided by inspiration, that the Martyrs who suffered under Pagan and Papal persecutions, held the same faith, and that the faith which they held, and for which they suffered, is the faith which was delivered to the saints. The apostle John saw in vision "under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held * It is called in another place, "the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ "† These are the Martyrs under Pagan Rome. But with reference to those who suffered afterwards, under Papal Rome, it is said: "Here is the patience of the saints: Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."‡ The faith, then, which the Martyrs held under Pagan and Papal Rome, and for which they suffered, was the same, and was the WORD OF GOD AND THE FAITH OF JESUS. But we know, by evidence unequivocal and undeniable, that the doctrinal opinions of the Martyrs under Papal Rome, were the doctrines of the evangelical system, and not those of the liberal system. They exist now upon historical records, and in public creeds; and are denominated the Doctrines of the Reformation. The Doctrines of the Reformation then, which we denominate the evangelical system, have the seal of heaven impressed upon them, as being the WORD OF GOD AND THE FAITH OF JESUS, THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

I am now to explain the manner, in which the Churches of our Lord should contend for the faith. And,

1. By a proper exercise of their civil influence.

* Rev. vi, 9. † Rev. xii, 17. ‡ Rev. xiv, 12.

The rights and duties of Christians, as members of a civil community, are not, it is believed, generally understood. As in the first generations of New-England, every thing, almost, was done by civil government, to promote religion; the idea has descended, that, christians have *some influence* to exert, favorable to religion, through the medium of government: without the perception exactly, how it is to be done in the present altered state of things which exist. Christians now in their civil capacity, are members of a great empire, whose administration cannot be modified in accommodation to local religious purposes. A multitude of denominations of christians have arisen, also, each, upon principles of religious liberty, entitled to impartial protection; and excluding in behalf of any, governmental favoritism.—In this new state of things, christians are perplexed, and know not what to do. They are afraid to withhold their efforts, to benefit religion through the medium of government; and environed by difficulties and dangers, they are afraid to exert it. For my own satisfaction in the first instance, I have been led to investigate the subject; and though I have not found it unattended with difficulties, my mind rests in the following results.

1. Christians are not to attempt to control the administration of civil government, in things merely secular.

This is what our Savior refused to do, when he declined being a king, or ruler, or judge. It would secularise the church, as the same conduct, secularised the church of Rome:—and bring upon her, and justly, a vindictive reaction, of hatred and opposition. When great questions of national morality are about to be decided, such as the declaration of War; or as in England the abolition of the slave trade, or the permission to introduce christianity into India by Missionaries; it becomes christians to lift up their voice, and exert their united influence. But, with the annual detail of secular policy, it does not become christians to intermeddle, beyond the unobtrusive influence of their silent suffrage. They are not to "strive, nor cry, nor lift up their voice in the streets. The injudicious association of religion with politics, in the

time of Cromwell, brought upon evangelical doctrine and piety in England, an odium which has not ceased to this day.

2. It is equally manifest that christians should not attach themselves exclusively to any political party, or take a deep interest in political disputes.

No party is so exclusively right, as to render it safe, for any man, to commit his conscience to its keeping, and act implicitly according to its dictation. Nor can any party, in a popular government, be sufficiently secure from change, to render it safe, to identify with it, the interests of religion. Beside, if christians enter deeply into political disputes, they will be divided, and one denomination arrayed against another, in their prayers and efforts: and one christian against another, in the same church. A spirit of party zeal creates also a powerful diversion of interest and effort from the cause of Christ: creates prejudices in christians one against another: and in the community against the cause itself. Annihilates spirituality of mind; prevents a spirit of prayer, and efforts for revivals of religion: and renders christians the mere dupes, and tools, of unprincipled, ambitious men. No sight is more grievous or humiliating than to see christians continually agitated, by all the great and little political disputes of the nation, the state, the city, and town, and village, toiling in the drudgery of ambition, and flowing hither and thither like waves which have no rest, and cast up only mire and dirt. I am persuaded that there has been utterly a fault among christians in this thing; and that there is no one particular in which it is more important that there should be a reformation.

3. It is plain, also, that no attempt should be made by christians of one denomination, to hinder the prosperity of other denominations, by any monopoly of governmental influence and favor.

The end of heaven has been answered, in the powerful and direct aid given to the churches, by the civil fathers of New-England. Then, it was needed, to lay foundations, to form habits, to surmount obstacles, and to carry the churches through the wilderness. But now it is not needed, and can-

not be bestowed, in the manner it has been. All denominations of christians must live now, by a general impartial favor of government, and their own efforts, the goodness of their cause, and the smiles of heaven. The *favoritism* of government in a free country is an advantage too precarious also, to be employed safely, by any denomination. For such is the instability of popular governments, that their partial aid if resorted to might exalt at one time, and abandon and persecute at another. All denominations have an equal interest now, in renouncing all attempts at securing the partial favor of government; and in insisting upon impartial protection and favor only.

Should any denomination however be so destitute of wisdom, as to attempt to propagate its opinions, and facilitate its progress, by a monopoly of literary influence, through governmental favor, and by rendering their own sentiments a passport to places of honor and trust, in the higher, and more subordinate stations of civil office and employment. If in these, and other ways, they should seek to give to themselves, by the adventitious favor of government, a weight in the community, and an influence on the public mind, favorable to their own religious views, and adverse to those of other denominations: in such case, civil and religious liberty would authorise and demand, that, all christians of other denominations, should withhold their suffrage from the ambitious sect, who had perverted and abused, the public confidence. This, by those who should experience the salutary admonition, would be deprecated, no doubt, as "*introducing religion into politics*" but it would in fact be, only a righteous effort to put *that religion out of politics* which they had unrighteously identified with them:—and to place the religious rights and privileges of christians, upon an equality. When this had been accomplished, persons of worth, of that denomination, exempt from such sectarian bias as would abuse the confidence reposed in them, might enjoy the public favor as before.

4. I cannot perceive that churches are bound in point of duty, or required on the ground of policy, to confine their

suffrages exclusively, to persons of their own denomination, or to regulate them, exclusively, with reference to piety or doctrinal opinions.

There are certain guarantees of integrity, and of security to the general interests of religion, which as christians, we are bound to require. There must be such a belief in the being of God, and of accountability and future punishment, as lays a foundation for the practical influence of an oath: such exemption from immorality, as will render the elevated example of rulers safe to the interest of public morals: such general approbation of the christian religion, and its institutions, as will dispose them to afford to religion, the proper protection and influence of government: and such exemption from sectarian zeal, as will secure from abuse, the confidence of *other denominations*, and an administration impartial in its aspect upon *all* of them. But where these securities are given, I do not perceive that christians are forbidden to repose confidence in men, for civil purposes, who do not profess religion, or afford evidence of piety. Men of piety are doubtless to be preferred and greatly to be desired, other things being equal: but I cannot perceive, that the qualifications for civil trust, and for membership in the church, are the same: and wherever they have been so regarded, the consequence has been, the intrusion of unsanctified men by a lax examination, or by dispensing entirely with piety as a qualification for communion. As long as communion in the English church shall continue to be an indispensable qualification for office, so long will the tide of ambition roll through her interior, and damp the fire upon her altars. It was the mistake of our pious fathers in making the terms of communion and civil trust the same, which produced the lax mode of admission to the churches of New England, followed by the long and dreadful declension from evangelical doctrine and piety, which, in many churches continues to this day: and the same course persisted in would perpetuate the same effects.

What, then, is the ground, which the churches ought to take? It is the high ground of Christian temper, Christian principle, and Christian practice. It is a great mistake if any suppose,

that their conduct in relation to things spiritual, may be regulated by one rule, and in things civil by another. The Gospel furnishes Christians with rules for their entire direction, in all things. In this respect, as well as others, the law of the Lord is perfect, and every man of God, is, by his Bible, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

Let christians, then, not under the influence of party zeal, but in the fear of God, as those who must give an account; withhold their suffrages from men whose known opinions destroy the practical influence of an oath; whose open hostility to all religion, renders it unsafe and sinful to confide in them; whose immoral habits would contaminate the public morality; or whose sectarian zeal, would incapacitate them for a liberal and impartial legislation on the subject of religion:. and when this is done, let them no longer know "any man after the flesh:" but without reference to political party, or doctrinal creed, vote for those who are in other respects worthy of their confidence. Every community needs in its bosom, men of cool and uncommitted feeling, to allay the fierceness of party strife, and to come forth for the salvation of the nation, on emergencies of danger: and why should not an host of such men, lovers of their country and their God, be found in the church, instituted by heaven, to promote peace on earth and good will to men. The interest of science and literature, are regarded as too important to be identified with political parties; and are permitted to enjoy the retreat of the groves, far from the noise of strife and war: and why should not the interests of religion, be allowed to stand aloof from the conflicts of ambition, and the din of controversy? As political animosities rage, in free governments, and competitions for office and power are conducted, and ever will be, till the world is far better than it now is;—every christian may say of political partizans as Jacob said of Simeon and Levi. "Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations: O, my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly mine honor, be not thou united."

The effect of such a retreat, by Christians, from the annual details of party strife, and of the silent exertion of

evangelical influence in the exercise of the right of suffrage, would be attended with the happiest effects.

The political alienation of Christians would cease, and be followed by the increase of brotherly love. Their diversion from religious enterprise would cease, and they would have more time and more zeal for the service of Christ. The prejudice against religion, occasioned by their political officiousness, would be avoided; and that influence, which, before, was worse than lost in the turmoils of party, would be sanctified and devoted to the cause of Christ.

In all the competitions for political elevation, of which there will always be many in free governments; the suffrage of a Christian community, held in reserve, to be exercised under the influence of conscience, and a cool uncommitted discretion, would have an influence highly salutary to the state, and to the interests of piety and morality. As long as Christians are divided, and will vote blindly, under the influence of a political mania; no individual fears the consequence of irreligion, or immorality; and no party, fears the consequence in their candidates for office.

But if Christians retire from unhallowed competitions, to bestow their suffrage by the dictation of an enlightened conscience, they will hold an amount of suffrage, not to be lightly regarded or despised on either side. In this, there is no electioneering, no officious meddling, and no violence. Christians exercise their own civil rights, under the guidance of their own consciences, enlightened by the word of God; and in doing it, allay the violence of party, elevate the standard of morality, and secure to religion, all the protection that it needs, and to their country, so far as their influence can avail, an administration of the government, devoted to the public good, and not to the interests of a party. Experience has evinced the vanity of all hopes of religious and moral purity from the influence of civil governments directly: government itself, needs to be brought under the influence of Christian principle, and to be embued with Christian feeling: an event, which can be accomplished, only, as the public opinion shall be purified and regulated by religious and

moral principle. But, this silent leaven of the mass, can be the result only, of a general increase of religion and the proper exercise by Christians of their civil influence. I would say therefore in the language of Wilberforce "Let true Christians then, with becoming earnestness, strive in all things to recommend their profession, and to put to silence the vain scoffs of ignorant objectors. Let them boldly assert the cause of Christ in an age when so many, who bear the name of Christians, are ashamed of Him; and let them consider as devolved on them the important duty of suspending for a while the fall of their country, and, perhaps, of performing a still more extensive service to society at large; not by busy interference in politics, *in which it cannot but be confessed there is much uncertainty;* but rather by that sure and radical benefit of restoring the influence of religion, and of raising the standard of morality. Let them cultivate a catholic spirit of universal good will, and of amicable fellowship towards all those, of whatever sect or denomination, who, differing from them in non-essentials, agree with them in the grand fundamentals of religion. Let them countenance men of real piety wherever they are found; and encourage in others every attempt to repress the progress of vice, and to revive and diffuse the influence of religion and virtue. Let their earnest prayers be constantly offered, that such endeavors may be successful, and that the abused long-suffering of God may still continue to us the invaluable privilege of vital Christianity."

2. The churches of our Lord are to maintain the faith delivered to the saints by inculcating it early, and earnestly upon children.

Catechetical instruction was adopted universally, by the primitive Christians; was practised by the Waldenses as their safeguard against the seductions of the Papists; was resorted to by the churches of the Reformation, and continued by the churches of New England; and has uniformly been followed by the revival or decline of religion, as it has been persisted in or neglected. It is pre-eminently important that there

be in the church, symbols of evangelical doctrine, associated with the earliest recollections of her children.

The objection that children cannot understand the doctrines of the Bible, is unfounded. They can understand them, in their order, as early as they can understand any thing. The being and character of God, the doctrines of accountability, depravity and the necessity of a moral change, are comprehended by children early, and with great ease. But even, if they do not, at the time, understand the *words*, they commit to memory, will they never understand them, or derive benefit from them? Would any parent be willing to risk the commitment by his children of obscene songs, because, at the time, their import was not understood? Would not the words be a leaven of impurity in the memory, to contaminate the mind as it opened to the comprehension of their meaning? So the doctrines of the Bible, though deposited as a dead letter, may become a fountain of life to the soul, when it shall open the eye of its understanding upon them.

The plan of leaving children uninstructed in religion that they may come with an unbiassed mind to the subject, is impracticable. An evil heart, is, itself, a powerful bias against the truth. And if the servants neglect to sow good seed, the enemy will certainly sow tares. The sure consequence of leaving children to grow up without religious instruction, will be irreligion, and prejudice against the truth.

Whenever, therefore, our doctrinal catechisms are laid aside, a breach wide as the sea is opened for the enemy to come in.

3. The faith delivered to the saints must be maintained by means of literary institutions regulated and controlled by its sanctifying power.

It is evident, that the youth of our colleges cannot be governed, without efficient moral influence. In our free country neither military coersion, nor civil power, nor ambition will, alone, avail to subdue the vicious propensities and direct the principles and habits of the young. Moral influence must be employed; and the most powerful moral influence is that ex-

erted by evangelical religion. This system of faith imposes a stricter rule of duty, and enforces its requisitions by more powerful sanctions, attended, when faithfully exhibited, by the influences of the Spirit giving them effect on the heart. The salutary influence of revivals, and of the beneficiaries of the churches in our colleges, in promoting among the young men generally, purity of morals, and increasing the facilities of government, are manifest and great.

Another proof of the necessity of such an influence is found in the destructive consequences of a perverted literature. Talents and learning are moral power; and cannot be arrayed against religion without disastrous effects. If these, then, are beheld chiefly in alliance with error, and the truth associated chiefly with uncultivated intellect, how great and powerful will be the prepossession in favor of error, and against the truth? We may as well expect the application of all the mechanical powers in the natural world, without effect, as of the energies of talent and literature in the moral world, without effect. A reliance on the power of God, in such circumstances, is presumption; for it supposes, in opposition to the declarations of his word and his providences, that he will protect by miracle without the use of means.

The opinion that God has dispensed with learning and talents as auxiliaries in the work of defending and propagating the faith, has been adopted hastily and without reason. The foolishness of preaching by which he saves, is not foolish preaching; and the weak things which he employs to confound the mighty are not uncultivated intellect and ignorance. The principal defenders of the faith in the Primitive Church were men of vigorous minds and extensive knowledge. The apostles could speak in every tongue; and, besides having been instructed by Christ, were, by the Holy Ghost, reminded of his words, and taught what to say. Augustine was, in his day, a host. Luther and Calvin were men of might. And the Reformers generally had the advantage of their antagonists in literature and science. That none should preach the gospel who have not had the advantages of a liberal education, we do not assert nor believe. But that such should be the

ordinary qualifications of Ministers we do stedfastly believe.

Is it necessary to add, that, it is the duty of the Church universally, to withhold her sons from those literary institutions which are hostile to the doctrines of grace? It is ludicrous to pretend that "no doctrines in particular are taught" in such institutions; and that no influence is exerted to bias the minds of young men against the evangelical system. We might as well speak of a sword with no edge in particular, or a book containing no ideas in particular, as of religious instruction without any religious doctrines in particular. Besides, what shall we think of Churches associated on purpose to train up youth in the doctrines of Christianity, sending them where "no doctrines in particular are taught?" And is it true, can it without a miracle be true, that no influence is exerted in such institutions to pervert the minds of young men? Will the faculty, whose opinions are known and revered as they are wont to be by their pupils, and having in their hands the distribution of literary honors, have no influence in forming a popular sentiment hostile to the doctrines of the Reformation? Will this atmosphere of opposition and ridicule, in which a youth, whose previous education has been evangelical, is sent to live and move and have his being, exert no influence in unsettling his opinions? Possibly he may not make shipwreck of the faith; but is this a justification for exposing him to temptations which to nineteen in twenty will prove fatal? How many pious parents already weep over blasted hopes? How many children of the Church have, through the perversion of their talents and acquirements, become her most powerful adversaries? Were the evils confined to the unhappy victims, it would be deplorable: for what shall it profit a man if his son gain the highest point of literary attainment and renown, and lose his soul? But many parents of evangelical opinions, influenced by the example of Christians, may send their children who are not themselves beyond the reach of perversion. And all may have brothers, and sisters, and companions, and relatives, on whom they may exert a fatal influence, and thus be-

come the instruments of an extended diversion of the public opinion.

4. The faith delivered to the saints, is to be contended for by a faithful exhibition of its sanctions.

These, are contained in the punishment threatened to the rejection of truth, as a crime; and the calamities inseparable from the rejection of it, if it were not a crime. The doctrines of revelation are not articles of speculation merely, but principles of moral government. They disclose the law, the Gospel, and the providence of God. They are declared also, to be so plain, that they can no more be misunderstood, innocently, than darkness can be mistaken innocently for light, bitter for sweet, thorns for grapes, thistles for figs, tares for wheat, or ashes for bread. But if there were no criminality attached to the rejection of the truth, the calamities of rejecting it, would be the same, as if its rejection were criminal. If we could separate criminality from sin, it would still be a principle of misery. Enmity against God, malevolence, envy, revenge, intemperance, and lust, are sources of misery, if they were not crimes; and thus it is with fundamental error in doctrine. The character, law, Gospel, and providence of God, are realities, as unmodified by human opinion, as the laws of the natural world: and the calamity of adopting false opinions on these subjects, and of opposition of heart to the true character and government of God, is the same in its consequences as a calamity, whether it be criminal or not. To be carnally minded, in either case, is death. He that goes into eternity, in a state of opposition to the character and government of God, is undone, whether guilty or not guilty.

It is an admitted fact, that, repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are some how, indispensable to render it consistent for God to pardon sin. But this repentance, and this faith, are definite realities, and if a mistake were not criminal, *that* which is not repentance, cannot have the *effect* of repentance, and *that* which is not faith, cannot have the *effect* of faith, in rendering it consistent for God to pardon sin; however innocently the mistake may come to pass. Beside, men as sinners, must be sanctified, as well as par-

doned, to fit them for heaven. But their sanctification must be accomplished, not by physical power exclusively, but by the instrumentality of the truth. It no more belongs to omnipotence to give to error, the effect of truth, on the minds of free agents, than to cause a thing to be, and not to be, at the same time. A law without rewards or punishments, cannot *be made* as influential on moral beings, as a law with sanctions, at all more than vacuity in the scales, can *be made* as weighty as lead. Thou shalt kill cannot be *made* to have the same effect, as the prohibition, "thou shalt not kill." And "the soul that sinneth it shall" not "die," cannot be *made* to affect the mind of a sinner, like the denunciation "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." In like manner, the declarations, "The carnal mind is" *not* "enmity against God;" "if a man be" *not* "born again, he shall see the kingdom of God;" "he that doth" *not* "repent and believe, shall be saved;" and he that is" *without* "holiness, shall see the Lord;" "and he that doth" *not* "deny himself, shall be a disciple of Christ;" cannot be made to have the same effect in exciting fear, or producing conviction of sin, or repentance, or faith, as the contrary declarations. It is idle to talk of the power of God, or of the goodness of God, or of the mercy of God, or of his paternal character; we may as well rely on these attributes to prevent the effects of fire, or water, or poison, on the natural body. We may as well play with the adder, or meet the hungry lion, or leap the precipice, or stand before the cannon's mouth, confiding in God's goodness and our sincerity to prevent harm, as to disregard or oppose all the great laws of his moral government, and our moral nature, and expect that his power and goodness will avert the consequences, and save us without the truth, or by the instrumentality of error. Believing, then, as we do, that the evangelical system is the faith delivered to the saints, *the very gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:* and that the rejection of it is fatal, on the ground of crime, and fatal in the nature of things, as moral beings are constituted, we are bound to preach this gospel, as, in our opinion, indispensable to salvation.

We are bound to do this, because to do otherwise, would be to preach the gospel without sanctions: which would render it of none effect. We are bound to do it also, because, as men are constituted, *opinion* has influence, and we owe its efficacy to Christ, and to the souls of men. The gospel, if it had been preached without sanctions, by Christ and his Apostles would have excited little opposition, and have done little good. The Scribes and Pharisees would not have been offended at Christ, but would have admired his Catholic spirit, if to his doctrine he had subjoined; "These are my opinions—but those who differ from me, are doubtless honest and sincere, and will be mercifully accepted by our heavenly father." Idolaters, also, would have added Christ, as a God, to their thirty thousand gods, if he in return, would have given to each, and his worshippers, the right hand of fellowship. So it is, precisely, in respect to the doctrines of the evangelical system. "*Charity*" would "*suffer long*" and be as "*kind*" to us, as to Mahommedans, or infidels, or the diversities of liberal men; if the concession could only be made by us, that those who reject these doctrines, may be innocently and safely wrong. It is holding them as essential to salvation, and all opposite systems as fatal, that overcomes the patience of *charity itself*, and bring upon us, the retribution of invective and obloquy. All this however only discloses the efficacy upon the consciences of men, of preaching the truth with its sanctions: and increases our obligations, and our motives, to do it faithfully.

I would not incumber the subject here, with the question, what will become of the heathen, if the faith delivered to the saints be essential to salvation? For if it were true, that those to whom it has not been delivered, may be saved without it; it would not follow, that those can be, to whom it has been delivered, and by whom it has been rejected.

Nor is it needful to adjust the seeming, or real differences, of those Christians, who hold, some to more, and others to less of the system. For the question is not, *how much of this system* may be misunderstood, consistently with sanctification by that which is still embraced—but can it be re-

jected entirely, by those who possess the Bible, and they who do it, be sanctified without it, and saved by the instrumentality of error. Nor is it a question of any consequence whether it be *possible* for a man to be saved, who rejects this system, if it be in fact, as we believe it to be, the Gospel. For what if it were possible for a man who rejects it, to be saved, does that prove that he will be saved? And do we need no higher evidence that we shall be saved, than is implied in the fact of its bare possibility?

Nor is the duty of preaching this faith as indispensable to salvation, affected at all, by the consideration that we are fallible, and may possibly be mistaken in our opinions: For, so long as we believe, whether correctly or not, we must act according to our belief. Nor is this setting in the judgment seat, and "dealing damnation round the land," at *all* more than our believing certain human productions to be the laws of the state, and that some men have transgressed them, and will be punished, is dealing damnation round the land.

Nor is it bigotry. Bigotry consists in a blind attachment to opinions, from inclination, passion, and prejudice, and may be manifested in as high a degree, in the avowal and propagation of liberal, as evangelical opinions.

Neither can I perceive in what respect it is uncharitable. For what is charity? Not a decision of the understanding, but an affection of the heart. It is *love—good will—benevolence.*—But while it leads us to hope, as long as there is room to hope, that a fellow creature is not guilty, and in danger, it does not lead us to resist competent evidence of the fact, or to conceal from him, our opinion of his character, or our sense of his danger. The more we love him, the more plain will be our note of admonition, the more earnest our intreaty, and the more vigorous our exertion, to save a soul from death. Charity, does not consist in creeds of strict, or liberal import: but in the temper of heart, with which they are adopted, and propagated. It is very possible, that a liberal creed, may be associated with a haughty and vindictive temper; and what is called a severe creed, with the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

"Charity suffereth long and is kind" *under severe provocations.* "Envieth not" *a successful competitor for popular favor.* "Vaunteth not itself;" *does not trumpet its own virtues and praises.* "Is not puffed up" *with vain self-estimation.* "Doth not behave itself unseemly" *by a light, and vain deportment.* "Seeketh not her own;" *has no pleasure in monopolies.* "Is not easily provoked" *by the perverseness of men.* "Thinketh no evil," *plotteth none —suspecteth none.* "Rejoiceth not in iniquity;" *as if the means could sanctify the end.* But "rejoiceth in the truth," *as having to do with the affections.* "Beareth all things;" *revilings and misrepresentations with meekness.* "Believeth all things" *just as they are revealed, as those knew all things who had an unction from the Holy One.* "Endureth all things;" *temptations with fortitude, afflictions with submission.*

5. The faith delivered to the saints is to be defended by earnest written discussion.

The opinion that controversy is of no use because disputants never convince each other, is derived from a very limited view of the subject. It is nearer the truth to say, that no great advance has been made in science, religion, or politics, without controversy; and certain it is that no æra of powerful theological discussion has ever past away, without an abiding effect in favor of truth. The discussions of Augustine, Luther and Calvin are felt to this day; and the controversial writings of Edwards have been to error, what the mounds and dykes of Holland have been to the sea.

One danger only is to be guarded against, it is that of diminishing, in the public mind, the high sense which has existed of the criminality and danger of error. If our personal attachments, and literary friendships, and courtesy of manner, should bring down the high and holy subject of contending for the faith, to a cool and amicable trial of classical and polemical skill; the public feeling would soon be chilled, and fall to this low level of practical estimation. Every discussion of the doctrines of Christianity should be conducted with benevolence evidently, but in a language and in a manner which carries home to the hearts of

men, the full impression of our deep conviction, both of the criminality and the danger of rejecting the truth.

6. Another means of defending the faith, is to be found in a careful maintenance of the apostolic tenure of membership in the visible church.

This, there is no reason to doubt, consisted in a credible profession of repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And as long as these continued to be the terms of admission, the primitive churches continued in a healthful state. But when, as a matter of courtesy or of authority, the tenure of membership was altered, after the protection and control of civil government began; a door was opened at which the state entered, unsanctified, the church of God, and in the progress of ages, reared the most terriffic despotism of superstition and ambition, that ever provoked God or oppressed men.

At the reformation the same interposition of government modified the terms of admission, and by the secular and unsanctified mass thrown upon the church, hindered its consummation, and prepared the way for that swift and great declension from evangelinal doctrine and vital godliness which followed.

When our fathers came to this land in their flight from persecution, it was primarily that they might build the church, according to the evangelical pattern, of lively stones only; and in the beginning the tenure of membership was a professed belief in the doctrines of the reformation, attended by credible evidence of regeneration. This strict tenure of membership, about the close of the first generation, became a subject of complaint, by those who were excluded from office, because they could not conscientiously join the church, and by those whose children on the same account remained unbaptized, and by emigrants from England of less strictness of religious sentiment, who came over after the first perils of settlement were past. These united, constituted a strong party in the State who were for admitting all persons of a regular life to full communion, on their making a profession of their belief in the christian religion, without any inquiry with respect to a change of heart; and for regarding all who

had been baptized in infancy, as, on that ground, entitled in adult age to membership in the church. The legislators generally favored the liberal side of the question, and some ministers. The innovation was however strenuously resisted by the rest of the clergy, and by the churches almost universally. While hosts without assembled, and murmurs long and loud were heard, they stood to defend the gates of Zion from the intrusion of the stranger. At length, however, they were overpowered by numbers. The gates of the holy city were burst open, and the world rushed in, and took possession of the baptismal water and the sacramental host. Thus at a stroke was prostrated the system of church organization established by heaven to perpetuate pure doctrine and vital piety; and from this time for three quarters of a century, both declined in a manner the most rapid and alarming which the churches of New-England ever witnessed.

In the course of ten years after this event, a suspension of divine influence took place, in the conviction and conversion of sinners so signal and alarming, as induced the legislature to call a Synod to inquire into and report the causes. The alarm was great, and the lamentations loud and many. Mr. Stoughton in an election Sermon 1660 said, "Alas, how is New-England in danger this day to be lost: even in New-England; to be buried in its own ruins! How sadly may we lament that all are not *Israel* that are *now* of Israel! How is the good grain diminished and the chaff increased!" In 1683; the Minister of Weymouth declared that "A great failure has taken place in the work of conversion, in the frequency of a credible profession of religion, and in the tokens of formality hypocrisy and apostasy." Dr. Increase Mather says 1697, that "Dr Owen has proved, that, the letting go, by the primitive churches of the principle, that, particular churches ought to consist of regenerate persons only, brought in the great antichristian apostasy." In the year 1700, he predicted, that, if the begun declension, (occasioned by the admission of unrenewed men into the church,) should continue to progress for thirty years to come, as it had done for thirty years past; the more conscientious people, would be

constrained to gather churches out of churches. A prediction, which was extensively verified, in about that time. This suspension of divine influence, and decline of vital religion, continued until the time of Edwards, the Luther of New-England, who by his example, and by his unanswerable treatise, on the terms of communion, revived the practice of receiving to the communion none but those, who furnished credible evidence of a moral renovation by the spirit, and of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. A practice, which, has been steadily increasing, from his day to this; and with it, evangelical doctrine, and revivals of religion.

By this course of ample experiment, in the primitive church, at the reformation, and in New-England; the point is settled, that, evangelical doctrines, cannot be maintained in the churches of our Lord, but by maintaining the apostolic tenure of membership. Let men of the world be amalgamated with the pious, in the church, and soon evangelical opinions will be exiled, or remain only in her creed a dead letter.

In the application of this subject we invite the attention of those, to what has been advanced in this discourse, whose minds have been unsettled and perplexed, in respect to the claims of the liberal and evangelical systems, to be regarded as the faith delivered to the saints: or, who have been accustomed to regard the latter system, as unintelligible, contradictory, absurd, and of no salutary practical influence.

We are sensible, that, in our land, there are many, who have no opportunity of hearing the evangelical system of doctrines stated and defended, in a manner which its advocates would approve: and that, no small prejudice has arisen against it, through misapprehension. But with his Bible in his possession, we are constrained to believe, that, every man may know what the Scriptures say on these subjects, and that, if the evangelical system be divine, it cannot be rejected with impunity. If, to any, this opinion shall seem severe, and as some have said, as if we were *glad* that many will be lost; we can say with an Apostle, and call God to witness, that we have great heaviness and continual sorrow in our

hearts, for our brethren our kinsmen according to the flesh;* whom, as we understand the Bible, we cannot but regard as fatally deceived.

If the effects of their mistake were in our view, confined to this transient scene; or, if we could believe, that, the truth of God as a whole, could be misunderstood, and rejected, consistently with that moral renovation of the heart, which is indispensable to communion with God, and admission to heaven; we might hold our peace: for of what possible consequence can it be to us, whether our fellow men agree with, or differ from us on points, which, in a few days, may be of no consequence. Time is too short, and eternity is too long, to justify great solicitude, about things which affect us only here. But if, as we believe, all the qualifications for heaven have ceased from the heart of man, and all the means of their restoration, lie in the system of revealed truth, and the efficacy given to it by the special influence of the Holy Spirit, and that God will not sanctify by the instrumentality of error, where his truth is rejected in the presence, or within the reach of ample evidence: how can we, in such circumstances, behold our fellow men, our friends, and neighbors, moving onward to the confirmed state of a miserable eternity, and not be deeply affected. We beseech you, brethren, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, that you be not offended with our plainness, in this discourse, nor with our importunity in its application. We repectfully, but earnestly, invite your attention to the argument, which has been submitted to your consideration; and intreat, that in the light of it, and of God's holy word, you will give to your own opinions one revision more: one *careful, prayerful, immediate revision:* for if you are wrong, it will soon be too late to retrieve the mistake. Allow me to ask you then, affectionately—solemnly, whether such collateral evidence, as we have been able to lay into the scale of evangelical exposition, can be the result of accident, or can be found, to be laid in the opposite scale? Are the doctrines of the liberal system, contained in the text, according to its

* Rom. ix, 1, 2.

most direct, and obvious meaning? Do they receive the sanction of approbation, from the most devout persons, and the sentence of condemnation from the irreligious and vicious? Does the liberal system produce the same objections, which the faith produced, as delivered to the saints? Is it gladly received by the common people, and rejected by the same sort of men in the higher orders of society, as rejected the Gospel? Do the doctrines of the liberal system, occasion a virulent hostility against them, in such circumstances, as show that it does not result from the ardent love of truth, or hatred of error? Do they occasion the same fears and anxieties about a future state; the same deep conviction of sin, and the same joyful and often sudden conversion to God, as are manifested under evangelical preaching, and in revivals of religion? Do the doctrines of the liberal system, produce revivals of religion at all; and not rather, awaken prejudices, and array influence against them. Do they produce the same style of piety; as deep, solemn, ardent, as the faith produced, which was delivered to the saints? Do they inspire the same solicitude and effort for the awakening and conversion of sinners, under the light of the gospel; or the same compassion for the heathen, and enterprise for their salvation. Does the liberal system inspire the same assurance of its being true, attended by the same unwavering constancy in its profession, which the faith delivered to the saints inspired, and do they produce the same assurance of hope, and the same sustaining joy "full of glory" in the hour of death.

We make the appeal to your consciences and your hearts, whether you do not perceive and know, that the liberal system is naked in respect to these great effects, which the faith delivered to the saints, did produce: and whether, all of them, do not with undeniable notoriety, cluster about the path of the evangelical system. If this be so, can that system be false, which produces the effects, so many, and so great, which were produced by the faith delivered to the saints: and can that be the true faith, which is so utterly destitute of them? The Gospel, is the most powerful moral cause, which has ever operated in this world. Its effects of course cannot be hid, and cannot be the same, with a system in direct opposi-

tion to it. The three or four first centuries, brought out unequivocally, the effects of the faith delivered to the saints which we have noted: these, all of them, are found associated still, with the evangelical system: and none of them with the liberal system. Is, then, the liberal system, the faith once delivered to the saints? Why does it not produce the same effects which that produced? Has the Gospel changed its nature, or lost its power, or has the human nature changed: or—is the liberal system another Gospel. Ponder well this subject for the judge is at the door, and the day will burst upon us soon, that will try every man's faith, and heart, and work.

Allow us then, once more to refer it to your consciences, whether, allowing the evidence from exposition to be on each side the same, this decisive weight of collateral evidence, ought not to withdraw your confidence from the liberal system, and to decide your judgment in favor of the evangelical system, as the very "word of God, and faith of Jesus." Every great system of truth and falsehood, is attended by a mass of presumptive collateral evidence, for or against it. And while the evangelical system commends itself to your confidence by all that variety of collateral evidence which has been exhibited, and the opposite system is wholly unattended by it; dare you, will you, reject the evangelical, and risk your salvation on the liberal system?

Does the thought, as you read, offer to rise, "Possibly, after all, my own system may be a deception, and that which I have disputed be true." Let it arise: for it may be the movement on your mind, of the long resisted spirit, suggesting to your conscience, "this is the way, walk ye in it."

Does fear flash across your mind, at times, the thought, as a momentary reality, "I may be wrong after all, and these doctrines which produce revivals of religion, and such joy in death, may be the faith delivered to the saints." Stifle not the unwelcome conviction, for it may be the commencement of eternal life in your soul. "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls."

TWO

DISCOURSES

ON

THE ATONEMENT.

BY MOSES STUART

ASSOCIATE PROF. OF SACRED LITERATURE IN THE THEOL. SEM.
AT ANDOVER.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The following sermons were preached on a sacramental occasion, in the chapel of the Theological Seminary, on the last Sabbath and last day of the winter term, when many of the students had left town. At the commencement of the summer term, when the students had reassembled, the writer received a request, that they might be again delivered in the chapel. With this request he complied; but on the second occasion of delivering them, several of the topics which the subject comprises were enlarged upon, and some others introduced, so that the whole constituted four discourses from the pulpit. As the discussions contained in this enlarged form were designed, in a particular manner, for students in theology, the author has judged it to be unnecessary to retain them all in the present publication; and he has reduced the whole to the size of two discourses, by many omissions and abridgments. While he is not without fears, that some things may now be represented in a manner less perspicuous than he could wish, on account of his compressed limits, he indulges the hope that the great points which he has aimed to establish, may be clearly discerned.

The publication of the sermons is now made at the request of the students of the Theological Seminary. A state of health which obliged the writer to retire from the circle of his duties for the remainder of the summer term, necessarily hastened the printing much beyond what he could have wished. As this was unavoidable, he hopes it will be duly estimated, if an apology is found necessary for any small blemishes in the discourses. For the leading sentiments, he stands fully responsible. They are the result of the deliberate consideration and deepest conviction of

THE AUTHOR.

THEOL. SEMINARY, JULY 12, 1824.

DISCOURSE I.

Isaiah liii. 5, 6.

He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes are we healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

The sentiment of this passage may perhaps be made more perspicuous, by a translation of it somewhat nearer to the spirit of the original.

"He was wounded on account of our transgressions; he was smitten on account of our iniquities; the chastisement by which our peace is procured was laid on him; and by his wounds are we healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have wandered each one in the path that he chose; and Jehovah hath laid on him the punishment due to us all."

This passage, no less than the august personage to whom it relates, has been to the Jews of ancient and modern times a stumbling block, and to many of the Gentiles foolishness. Very soon after Christians began, when disputing with the Jews about Christ crucified, to make their appeal to it, as proof that a suffering and atoning Saviour, Jesus of Nazareth, was foretold in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Jews set themselves to find out some other person,

or class of men, concerning whom the prophet might be regarded as here speaking. Some of them have maintained that he had reference to their nation at large; some that he had respect to Uzziah, Hezekiah, or Josiah; while others suppose that Isaiah, Jeremiah, or some one of the prophets, was the subject of his description. Nor have commentators and critics among Christians been wanting, who have advocated these opinions proposed by the Jews. Of late, the prevailing sentiment among a certain class of critics is, that the *prophetic order* of men among the Hebrews, rather than any particular individual of it, is referred to by Isaiah. As the prophets, in ancient times, were often subjected to sufferings and death, by the persecuting spirit which reigned among their cotemporaries; so they are supposed to be represented, in our text and context, as bearing the sins of the nation, and making atonement for them.

It is not my present design to enter into a particular examination of these discrepant and very unsatisfactory opinions. To the Jew I would say, In what other part of the Old Testament are the sufferings of any mere king or prophet ever represented as expiatory? The Mosaic law has prescribed expiatory sacrifices; and has prescribed *all* that were to be offered under the ancient dispensation. What part of this law speaks of expiation by the sufferings and death of any mere king or prophet? Or if the Jewish nation at large be the subject of the prophet's description, where is this nation, when persecuted and suffering, represented as an expia-

tory sacrifice? and for whom did they make expiation? On the contrary, are they not always represented as bearing the punishment due to their *own* transgressions, and not as bearing that due to others?

To the commentator bearing the name of Christian, and disposed to follow these wanderings of unbelief and offence at the cross of Christ, in which the Jews have so long indulged, I have only one brief remark to make; which is, that evangelists and apostles have told us, who is the subject of the prophet's description in our text and context. When the treasurer of the Ethiopian queen had been up to worship at Jerusalem and was returning home, by an express direction from the Spirit of God Philip the evangelist met him. As Philip drew near, he heard the Ethiopian reading a portion of our chapter; "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation, his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch said to Philip, of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the *same* Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Acts viii. 26—35.

Peter also has applied a part of our chapter to the same distinguished sufferer. "Christ suffered for us.....his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.....by whose stripes we are healed; for ye were as sheep going astray." 1 Pet. ii. 21—25.

The two last phrases are quotations from our text itself, and are certainly applied by the apostle directly to the Saviour.

I add only, that Jesus himself cites a part of our chapter, as containing a description of his own sufferings. "I say unto you, that what is written must be accomplished in me; And he was reckoned among the transgressors." Luke XXII. 37, comp. Is. LIII. 12.

I feel no concern further to vindicate the application of the text to the person of the Messiah. The matter resolves itself into the simple question, whether the interpretation of evangelists and apostles is to be admitted, and believed to be correct; or whether our own conjecture or philosophy is to be the ultimate authority, to which we make our appeal.

From the language of our text, as applied to Christ, I deduce the proposition, that HE SUFFERED AS OUR SUBSTITUTE; or, that HIS SUFFERINGS AND DEATH WERE AN EXPIATORY OFFERING, ON ACCOUNT OF WHICH OUR SINS ARE PARDONED AND WE ARE RESTORED TO THE DIVINE FAVOUR.

My present object is to discuss the doctrine of the atonement made by Christ, which this proposition brings to our view; and in doing this, I design

I. To make some explanations necessary to a right understanding of the subject.

II. To prove the doctrine.

III. To answer some objections alleged against it.

According to the method proposed, I am, *first*, to make some explanations necessary to a right understanding of our subject.

In order to avoid all misapprehension of the design which I have in view, let me observe at the commencement of this discourse, that it is not my object to treat of the *obedience* of Christ, considered as having an influence upon our redemption, or in procuring salvation for us. I speak of obedience here, in the sense which many of the older divines mean to express, when they employ the phrase *active* obedience of Christ, in order to distinguish his positive fulfilment of the divine law from what they name his *passive* obedience, by which they mean his humiliation and sufferings. To pursue the inquiry, in what sense, or to what degree, the active obedience of Christ contributes to our redemption, would carry me too far from the specific object which I now have in view. I shall therefore dismiss this topic with simply remarking, that while the sufferings and death of Christ are every where represented as the special procuring cause of our redemption, yet his obedience is also represented as a concurring cause or ground of our salvation. The Saviour's entire obedience or sinless perfection was essential to his character as a substitute for sinners; for if he himself had sinned, instead of presenting an acceptable sacrifice for others, himself would have needed an expiatory offering. That all which he did and said, during his incarnate condition, had some bearing on the great work which he came to accomplish, and did in some way contribute to it, cannot reasonably be doubted. But his expiatory sacrifice appears to be the great point, on which rests, in a peculiar manner, the hope of our restoration to the divine favour.

pains, in contending about certain *modes of expression*, which some may choose to employ, but which others think it better to avoid because they are liable to misconstruction; when, after all, there is a substantial agreement in regard to the idea to be designated? In reality, can such contention amount to any thing more than a strife about words? A strife unworthy of sober and earnest inquirers after truth; and one which never can serve any purpose, but to alienate from each other and divide those, who love the Saviour, and trust for acceptance with God solely in his atoning blood.

To pursue still farther the explanation of the leading terms employed to designate the doctrine which I am to establish; a *substitute* may be, and where it is voluntarily accepted on the part of him to whom any debt or reparation is due, *must* be, an equivalent of some kind or other, a satisfaction in some sense, for such debt or penalty due. But it may be equivalent or satisfactory, without being the same either in kind or quantity as that in the place of which it comes. For plainly an equivalent is of two sorts. The first has respect to *kind* and *quantity*, and requires equality or sameness in regard to both. The second is where the substitute answers the same *end*, as that would have done in the place of which it is put, or a higher end of the same nature. The first species of substitution or equivalency belongs to various transactions of business among men; such as borrowing and lending, exchange of various species of property, and other things of the like nature. Equivalency of the second

kind has respect to transactions of a civil or penal nature, and to the intercourse of rational beings with each other, as subjects of social or other laws. For example, banishment is often substituted by civil governments instead of inflicting the penalty of death; fines, instead of imprisonment or other corporeal punishment. So among men in their daily intercourse, confession of a fault, joined with a request of forgiveness, is accepted as a satisfaction for an injury done, or an insult offered; and is regarded as an equivalency for it. In all cases of this nature, which are exceedingly numerous and diversified, both in regard *to the* intercourse of men with each other, and *in* respect to civil rulers and their subjects, the equivalent or satisfaction is not the same in kind or quantity as that for which it is substituted. Indeed, in all transactions which have respect to a penalty for any injury done, or any violation of law, where substitution is admitted with regard to the offender, the first kind of equivalency, or that which consists in the same quality and quantity, is out of the question. The *letter* of a penal law demands that the offender himself, and no other, should suffer. But the *object* of the penalty—the ultimate and highest object of attaching it to the law—may be attained, perhaps, in some other way, and by substitution; even in a more effectual manner, than by a literal infliction of the punishment threatened. On the supposition that it can be, then if a substitute be admitted instead of literally inflicting the penalty, satisfaction may be truly said to be made, or an equivalent rendered, according to the common usage and

understanding of all men, in respect to subjects of this nature. Indeed the term equivalent has come, by usage, most commonly to imply that the substitute does differ in some respects from that for which it is substituted.

If Christ died then as a substitute for sinners, it is not at all necessary to suppose, that his sufferings were the same in quality and quantity, as would have been endured by those in whose room he suffered, in case the penalty of the law had been executed upon them. In fact such a supposition is replete with difficulties of a kind not easily to be removed. The worm that never dies —the cup of wrath without mixture which is drunk by sinners in the world of wo—we have strong reasons for believing, is the sting of a guilty conscience—self condemnation and reproach for having violated the just and holy laws of God. This sting the holy and spotless Saviour never felt; this was an agony to which his bosom of perfect purity must have been a stranger. However high then his sufferings mounted, they could not have been the same in *kind*, as those of the wicked in the world of misery.

Nor can we well conceive how they could have been the same in *quantity*, as they deserved whom he redeems. He suffered but a few hours; or, if you include his whole period of humiliation, but a few years. In his divine nature, considered as *the immutable God*, we cannot conceive of his having suffered; and indeed the Scriptures always represent him as having assumed the *human* na-

ture, in order that he might suffer. Phil. II. 6—8. Heb. II. 9. Great as his sufferings were, yet they were not like those of the damned, sufferings of absolute and hopeless despair. He could look beyond them, when hanging on the cross. He did. He could see the glory and prosperity of his kingdom as the certain result of them. He had a resurrection from the tomb in full view; he anticipated his ascension to the throne of majesty on high, in order to become "head over all things to the Church," and the object of heavenly worship—in order to participate in "the glory which he had with the Father before the world was." However great then his sufferings were, we can hardly conceive of their having been equal in quantity (so to speak) to those which were due to sinners, for whom he suffered.

When I say then that Christ in his sufferings was our substitute, I do not mean that those sufferings were an equivalent of the first kind, for the penalty remitted; or, in other words, that he did actually suffer torments the same in *kind* and *quantity* as were due to sinners. But still, it seems to me to be impossible for us to ascertain how great his sufferings really were. The peculiar constitution and the unspeakable dignity of the Saviour's person; the spotless innocence of his character; the agony in the garden which forced his whole frame to sweat as it were great drops of blood; his complaint on the cross that his God had forsaken him; the fact that he expired sooner than those who suffered with him; the commotion of the nat-

ural world at the woes which he endured; the heavens shrouded with darkness; the luminary of the skies extinguished; the vail of the most holy place rent, by which Jehovah's presence was concealed; the rocks and tombs bursting asunder; and the mouldering dust of the saints becoming reanimated with life—all, all concur to shew that the scene of suffering was such as the world had never witnessed; and that it is probably not in the power of language to express, nor of our minds to conceive, the extent of the agony which Jesus endured.

That he endured all this as our substitute, or on our account, is what I expect hereafter to prove. At present I would merely ask, Since he did not suffer on account of any guilt of his own, on what ground can they reconcile his sufferings with the justice of God, who hold that he was not a substitute for sinners?

Let me dwell a moment longer on the subject of the Saviour's agony, and observe, that unless the sufferings of Christ be regarded as exceedingly great, and in many respects of a nature altogether peculiar, his demeanour under them is quite irreconcileable with the undaunted constancy and patience and firmness, which he at all other times exhibited. When did he ever before shrink from suffering? When was he ever before appalled by danger? Never. Yet now, in what an agony do we behold him in the garden, at the prospect of crucifixion. What sinking of soul, what unutterable horror, does he exhibit on the cross. Thousands of other sufferers have met death, in all its most

dreadful forms, with far more composure, even when unsupported by the consolations and hopes of religion. Thousands of martyrs, feeble, emaciated, thousands even of the more delicate sex, have been stretched on the rack, or cast into the flames—punishments more dreadful than simple crucifixion—while with a dauntless, nay with a triumphant spirit, they rejoiced in the midst of torments. But here is a sufferer, the only one on earth who ever had a spotless character—filled too with exalted and certain hopes of ultimate triumph and glory—first shrinking with horror from the cup of suffering which he was to drink, and then uttering language of the highest possible agitation and distress upon the cross.

Here now is a difficulty which cannot be solved, on the ground that his death was in any respect like that of a common man. If it indeed were such, must he not be regarded by every one who contemplates his demeanour on the cross, as wanting in calmness and fortitude of soul, when he was so appalled and agitated with sufferings which others have triumphantly endured? Are we not constrained then to regard him as suffering in a degree unparalleled, indescribable, in short not capable of being conceived by us?

What this degree was, the Scriptures have not explicitly declared; nor indeed was such a declaration necessary. Enough, that in his sufferings the awful displeasure of God against sin has been manifested in a most impressive manner. Enough, if God has judged that his sufferings, as our substitute,

were carried to such a height, as was by infinite wisdom deemed necessary, in order to promote the best designs of the divine government.

To pursue my explanation; although I cannot consider an equivalent of the first kind as being rendered by the death of Christ, yet I fully believe that one of the second kind was rendered. The *object* of the penalty affixed to the divine law is *not revenge*. "God takes no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." The object of all penalty, under every wise and benevolent government, is to put restraint upon offences, to exhibit awful testimony or warning against them, and thus to secure the interests of virtue.

If now virtue be in the best manner promoted, and sin restrained, by the death of Christ and the consequences that necessarily flow from it, then the great object of the divine law and its penalties is promoted in the most effectual manner. Such I suppose to be the fact; but this is not the proper place to establish it. I only state so much, therefore, as is necessary to elucidate the meaning which I assign to the language that I have employed. Indeed, I view the great object of the divine law as answered by the death of Christ in a much higher degree, than it could have been by a mere law-administration and literal infliction of the penalty. Must not his death be regarded as a more awful manifestation of divine displeasure against sin, than the execution of the law on sinners themselves? I am forced to view the subject in this light, when I contemplate the infinite dignity of the

Saviour's person, and the spotless purity of his character; and then turn my eye to Gethsemane, and to the scenes of the cross.

I confess myself averse to indulging much in speculation here, as to the *how* and the *why* of the equivalency in question. My reason is, that the sacred writers do not seem to indulge in any curious speculation on the subject. Some things, as presented by them, appear exceedingly plain. When they bring to our view the WORD, who was in the beginning with God, and who was GOD; who created all things; who is GOD OVER ALL, and blessed forever; the TRUE GOD and eternal life; and represent him as becoming incarnate—as taking the form of a servant and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; and all this on our account, that we might be redeemed from deserved ruin; they do this to excite our gratitude, our love, our humility, our obedience; and to urge upon us our obligation to devote ourselves, with all we have and are, to the service of him "who loved us, and who gave himself to die for us." They teach us that the gospel presents motives to obedience of a higher nature, and puts restraints upon vice that are more effectual, than a system of law could do. With this *we* may well be content; for with this *they* appear to have been satisfied. Where is there any philosophizing, any refined speculation in their writings, about the *manner* in which equivalency or satisfaction is or can be made out? Can we not acquiesce in the subject, just as

they have left it? If they present the death of Christ as a most awful and affecting display of the evil of sin, and of the divine displeasure against it, enhanced beyond description by the dignity of his person, and the peculiar severity of his sufferings; and if this makes an appeal to the moral sensibilities of the human race, in favour of gratitude and obedience to God, and against sin, in a manner far more affecting and successful, than the literal execution of the penalty of the law on sinners; is not this sufficient? And if thus much lies on the face of the New Testament, and every reader, learned and unlearned, can see and feel it; this is enough; the object of the law is in the most effectual manner answered.

For myself, I need nothing more than this to produce quietude of mind, in regard to this part of our subject. More than this, the Laplander and the Hottentot—nay most of the human race—cannot well be expected to understand; nor can I see how it is really important that they should. If others feel that clear and satisfactory views about the manner in which equivalency is made out, are to be obtained by pursuing the speculations of a refined philosophy, I will not object. But I may suggest one caution, viz. that if we attempt to build the doctrine of atonement on the speculations of philosophy, and do not acquiesce in the subject, as it is simply presented by the writers of the New Testament—so simply, that the heathen can understand and feel it as well as we—then we must not be surprised, if we find philosophy objecting to

the atonement, and claiming a right to prostrate our edifice, by the same power which has raised it up.

I have said enough, I trust, to explain what I mean, and what I do not mean, by the principal terms employed relative to the doctrine which I am discussing. I pass on then

II. To prove the doctrine, that Christ in his sufferings was our SUBSTITUTE, or that by them he made AN EXPIATORY OFFERING for sinners.

Here I must ask at the threshold: Before what tribunal must the question be brought which this subject necessarily raises?

I am *bold* to aver that philosophy is not a competent judge to decide it. In averring this, however, I take it for granted, that philosophy is unable to disprove the credit due to divine revelation. On the supposition that such is the fact, and as a believer in divine revelation, I hold myself under obligation to prove nothing more in regard to the substitution or expiatory sacrifice of Christ, than that the Scriptures have revealed it as a FACT. Has God declared it to be a FACT? Do the Saviour and his apostles declare it to be so? These are the questions, and the only ones of any particular importance, about which a sincere and implicit believer in the divine testimony needs to be solicitous. It cannot surely be of much consequence, what difficulties can be raised by speculating on philosophical grounds, about the nature or manner of substitution. The fact itself is that with which we are concerned, as poor ruined sinners. We might indeed well say, that when the authority of

revelation is admitted, the questions *why* and *how*, in respect to the atonement, could be entirely dismissed from our discussion, as being by no means necessarily attached to it. Does philosophy find the doctrine of atonement by the death of the Son of God mysterious? We readily concede that it is so; and we know that the distinguished apostle of the Gentiles believed *the mystery of godliness to be great;* and that the angels themselves are represented as earnestly desirous of prying into this mystery.

But if philosophy wonders here, (for which we will not blame her,) yet she has no right to scoff. If atonement by the vicarious suffering and death of Christ be a reality, it is one which the book of God only reveals. I fully agree with the naturalists in saying, that the book of nature presents nothing but a blank leaf, in respect to an atonement effected in this manner. Not one syllable can be made out from it, with any certainty. The necessity of some atonement or expiatory offering, has indeed been felt by nearly all the human race, however unenlightened; and acknowledged in the bloody sacrifices which they have offered to the gods whom they worshipped. But the method of it, as proposed in the Gospel, is quite above the discovery of unenlightened or even philosophical reason. The most rigid sect of moralists among the heathen, did not admit that pardoning mercy could with any propriety be extended to those, who had incurred the penalty which justice demanded. Seneca declares that a wise man does not remit the punishment which he

ought to exact, (De Clementia II. 6. 7). How then could this philosopher, or those who were like him, discover or believe the doctrine of substitution or vicarious suffering by the death of the Son of God? What they never imagined, or what many when it is proposed to them regard as foolishness, God has declared to be the means of salvation. To revelation then we must go for any instruction, with regard to the doctrine of pardoning mercy through the atoning blood of Jesus.

But another view of the subject is necessarily suggested by that which has now been taken. This is, that as philosophy was unable to discover the doctrine of atonement by Christ, so she is equally incompetent to make any valid objections against it. She cannot shew that it is absurd. Could this be done, then we must admit that the doctrine of atonement by vicarious suffering would be incapable of defence; for the human mind, if it be well illuminated, and guided in its researches by candour and a love of truth, cannot receive and accredit that which is absurd. But who does not know that through ignorance, prejudice, and haste, or when influenced by erroneous philosophy, some men may pronounce things to be absurd, which the most acute, sober, and judicious think to be very rational? In regard, however, to the doctrine of substitution, the matter seems to be quite clear. Absurd this doctrine of itself cannot be called; for the wisest and best human governments, as has already been mentioned, often admit the principle, in respect to penalties incurred. But will any one venture on

account of this, to accuse civil rulers of acting irrationally and absurdly? Will any one even venture the assertion, that this principle, prudently and soberly applied, is not the means of evident gain in respect to the great ends which civil government is designed to accomplish? If not, then surely it must be conceded, that infinite power, connected with infinite wisdom and benevolence, *can* employ substitution in such a way as to promote the important ends of the divine government. Philosophy, most evidently, has it not in her power to disprove this; and therefore has no right to deny the possibility of it; much less to declare that the doctrine is absurd. In short, as she *cannot* do this, nor disprove the credit due to revelation, it is plain that the matter comes not at all within her jurisdiction.

The question in respect to substitution, then, stands high above the objections which all the efforts of philosophy can raise; equally unaffected by her sophistry at one time, or by her scorn and contumely at another.

It follows from what has been said, that the impossibility of substitution, under the divine government, cannot be established. Nay, I advance farther, and aver that so far from there being any impossibility in the case, it is a matter of fact that substitution was admitted for nearly fifteen centuries, under the Mosaic dispensation; to say nothing of the expiatory sacrifices of the patriarchal age. It was admitted too, under the Mosaic economy, as a type of the substitution or expiatory offering of Christ. Paul has taught us in the most explicit

manner, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, that *all the expiatory offerings and sacrifices of the Jews were typical of the great atoning sacrifice by the death of Christ; and that they were originally designed by God to be so.* Consequently, when thus authorized, we may draw a comparison from the one, in order to illustrate the other.

The expiatory offerings of the law were not a substitution, I admit, which did of itself procure a remission of the punishment due to the moral turpitude of sin; for it is impossible, as the sacred writer has told us, that the blood of goats and bullocks should take away sin, and tranquillize the conscience wounded by a sense of guilt. It could not remove the apprehension, that divine displeasure might inflict on the offender punishment of a spiritual nature. But still, it is a fact that the blood of goats and bullocks was appointed by God, to be an expiatory offering for certain offences against the Jewish law; while at the same time this very offering was also a type of the sacrifice to be offered by Christ, in order to remove the punishment due to moral turpitude. He who brought a sin or trespass offering, and presented it to the Lord, was exempted from the sentence which the law of Moses pronounced against the external offence that he had committed. The whole nation, as such, were freed from the penalty annexed to certain offences, on the great day of atonement, when the high priest entered the most holy place, and presented the blood of the national offering or victim before Jehovah; not indeed from the punishment of a spiritual nature due to sin, but from

some penalty of an external nature, threatened in the present life. In a word, God as the sovereign legislator and judge of the Jews did, by the exercise of his supreme right, actually appoint sin and trespass offerings as expiatory sacrifices; which being presented agreeably to his appointment were followed by the real remission, on his part, of the penalty due to certain offences, and threatened by the law of Moses. So the apostle himself states the subject. "The blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling those who were defiled, made expiation in respect to external purity," i. e. after the performance of such sacrificial rites, the Jews were regarded and treated, in respect to their external relations, as pure or free from exposure to the penalty threatened by the law of Moses. Heb. ii. 13.

The fact just stated cannot be called in question. We have only to open the book of Leviticus, and it is at once exhibited before our eyes.

Here, then, we are presented with a case of substitution; *actual* substitution by the appointment of God, the supreme legislator and judge of the Jewish nation and of all men; a case in which a beast was slain instead of the criminal being punished who made an offering of it, and who had himself incurred the penalty of the Mosaic law.

But *how* and *why* such an expiation as has been described was made by the blood of slain beasts, different persons have endeavoured, and might endeavour, to explain in various ways. I cannot enter at all here, into the discussion of this point Suffice it to say, that all who admit the reasoning in

the Epistle to the Hebrews, must admit that the Jewish sacrifices were typical of the sacrifice of Christ. Do not the representations of the Scripture also entitle us to believe, that the penitent offender, who was sufficiently enlightened in respect to the true nature of the Mosaic dispensation, while he knew that by his offering, penalties of an external nature would of course be remitted to him, might and probably did, by faith, look forward to the great atoning sacrifice, the antitype of that which he offered, for a remission of the punishment of a spiritual nature, which was due to his transgressions.

Considering now the facts in regard to this whole subject, as they stand disclosed in the Jewish Scriptures, who will venture to pronounce, that a similar arrangement under the general government of God in respect to men, is impossible? The moral purposes of God in respect to this government, we may cheerfully admit, are the highest purposes which are known to us. But had he no moral purposes to effect under the Jewish dispensation, and by the Mosaic institutes? Most certainly he had. Incipient and imperfect they were indeed, compared with the great moral ends accomplished by the Gospel. But still they were real. Yet God as the supreme lawgiver and judge of the Jews, did, in some cases, remit the penalty of his law as given by Moses, in consequence of a substitute for it. Now if the thing itself were absurd or impossible, he could not have done it. Nor can we conceive of any more impossibility that he should do the same thing under his general government of

men, than that he should do it under the Jewish dispensation. Wrong is not more really done (if there be wrong at all) in the one case, than in the other; and one is therefore just as possible for God as the other. So far as we can see, there is no more hazard to the general interests of the universe, in the admission of vicarious sacrifice for sinners, than there was to the Jewish commonwealth, by the admission of expiatory offering into its system of government.

In a word; God did admit vicarious sacrifices under his government of the Jews; and an inspired apostle has taught us that they were, and were designed to be, types of the great expiatory offering made by Christ. To express it in another manner; that was done in ancient times upon a smaller scale, which at a later period was done on a larger one. The penalty for certain offences against the Mosaic law, was removed by the sacrifice of goats and bullocks; and the penalty against the higher law of heaven (if you please so to name it), is removed by the death of Christ. If both are by the arrangement of heaven, the one presents no more impossibility than the other.

Nor can it be objected here, that the expiatory sacrifices of the law procured merely the remission of a civil or ecclesiastical penalty, which was wholly of an external nature, and could be inflicted by men; but that the removal of the penalty due to moral turpitude, is a very different thing, and has a much more important bearing upon the interests of God's moral government. I accede to the fact that

it has. But this does not render an expiatory offering impossible, *provided one adequate to the occasion can be made.* I believe the Scriptures teach us, that such an one has been made by the Son of God. As the end to be accomplished by a Saviour's death, was of a far higher, nobler nature, than that accomplished by the sacrifices of the Levitical law, so the victim that was to be offered, was of a rank which corresponded to the object to be attained. The redemption of men from everlasting death, (not of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles,) was concerned with this sacrifice. Well then might the apostle draw the admirable comparison, which he has drawn in Heb. IX. 13, 14, between the one species of offering and the other. "If," says he, "the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how MUCH MORE shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." That is, If the beast which perished forever under the knife of the sacrificing priest, did still, by divine appointment, make atonement for certain offences against the Mosaic law, so that the penalty denounced against them was remitted, and the offender treated as though he were not guilty; how *much more* shall the holy Saviour, a victim possessed of a nobler nature—of a never-dying spirit—make expiation for the moral turpitude of offences against God as the governor of the world.

If this reasoning of the apostle be admitted, then

we can never prove the impossibility of atonement for sin, by alleging that no victim can be adequate to the occasion. For the apostle plainly declares that the sacrifice of Christ was MORE adequate to the purpose for which it was made, than the death of the victim under the ancient dispensation, was to the occasion which demanded it.

Nor can the justice of God be alleged as constituting a ground of impossibilty, that an expiatory offering should be admitted for sinners. All men, who hold that there is forgiveness at all with God, must of course concede that his justice is no more impugned by the forgiveness of sin *through* an atonement, than it would be *without* any atonement. Consequently no objection of this nature can be urged by such, against the possibility of atonement.

Nor are the advocates of propitiatory sacrifice obliged to content themselves with merely shewing that it is *possible;* they may advance farther, and venture to say, that the *improbability* of such an arrangement under the divine government can in no valid manner be shown. Will its opponents appeal to the feelings of men in general, and declare that such a sacrifice is naturally revolting to the human mind? How then comes it to pass, that every tribe and nation, from the philosophic Greeks down to the roaming Tartars and the fiend-like race of New Zealand—every part of our degraded race however ignorant or barbarous, that have at all acknowledged the existence of any divinty—have agreed in offering to him propitiatory sacrifices? Does this universal custom of the mere children of nature,

look as if the doctrine were revolting to the first principles of the human breast? Or does it look as if the hand of Omnipotence had enstamped on the very elements of our moral constitution, a susceptibility of receiving it, a predisposition to admit it? Who will or can explain the origin and prevalence of vicarious sacrifices, on any other ground than this?

I proceed one step further. To me it seems plain, that although reason, unenlightened by revelation, never could have discovered a way of pardon for sin by the expiatory death of the Son of God; yet when all the attributes of the Deity are brought into full view by the Scriptures, and the character of man is also developed in full; then reason may well give, and to preserve her character *must* give, her assent to the doctrine of pardon by expiatory sacrifice, if she finds it there revealed.

God is just; therefore he will punish sin: and if we read only the book of nature, must we not say too, with Seneca, "therefore he cannot forgive it?" But revelation discloses his attribute of mercy; and mercy consists essentially in remitting the strict claims of justice, either in whole or in part. How then shall God possess these two attributes, and exercise them in respect to our guilty rebellious race? A question which "ages and generations" could not answer; a mystery hidden from them. A question which philosophy may seek in vain satisfactorily to solve. But in the cross of Christ—in his expiatory sufferings and death—we may find an answer. Here, "mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have embraced each other." In the agonies of Christ, a

personage of such transcendant dignity and glory, we see the terrors of divine justice displayed in the most affectng manner, and are impressively taught what evil is due to sin. In the pardon purchased by his death, we contemplate the riches of divine mercy. God might have displayed his justice, indeed, in the world of perdition, and called us to contemplate it as written in characters that would make us shudder. His mercy also he might have displayed, by the absolute and unconditional pardon of sinners, provided no atonement had been made. But who could look on the radiance of his simple justice, as exhibited only in such a manner, without extinguishing his vision forever? Or who could contemplate undiscriminating and unconditional mercy only, without being influenced to forget the awful displeasure of God against sin, or being emboldened to continue in it? But in the cross of Jesus, his justice and his mercy are united. Here is the bright spot where the effulgence of the Deity converges and centers. On this we may gaze with admiration, with safety, with delight; for here the rays of eternal glory meet and blend, so as to be sweetly attempered to our vision. The bow in the cloud, where the glories of the sun, the brightest image of its Maker in the natural world, meet and mingle, and present to our view the delightful token that the waters of a flood will drown the earth no more, is but a faint emblem of the attempered glory which beams from the cross of Jesus, the token of deliverance from a flood more awful than that of Noah.

DISCOURSE II.

Isaiah liii. 5, 6.

He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes are we healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

I have endeavoured, in the preceding discourse, to make such explanations as are necessary to a right understanding of our subject; and to prepare the way for the introduction of direct proof from the Scriptures respecting the expiatory sacrifice of Christ. I have endeavoured to show that we cannot refer the question, whether an expiatory offering has been made by the Son of God for the sins of men, to the tribunal of philosophy. The impossibility of such an offering, philosophy cannot prove. The fact that substitution in the case of penalties incurred, did for many centuries constitute a distinguishing characteristic in the administration of divine government among the Jews, must be admitted; and the possibility that it may constitute a prominent feature of God's *general* government, cannot therefore be disproved. I advanced a step farther, and undertook to shew that the improbability of an atonement for sin can by no means be made out;

inasmuch as the human race at large are deeply impressed with the need of propitiatory sacrifice. Moreover, the attributes of God and the character of man, as revealed in the scriptures, render the doctrine of pardon for sin through the expiatory offering of Christ, by no means improbable.

If I have succeeded in my endeavours to remove obstacles, which seemed to lie in the way of making an impartial estimate of Scripture testimony in respect to the subject before us; and have also shewn that the whole question must be referred for decision solely to the word of God; then we are prepared without embarrassment to pursue the inquiry, What is the testimony of revelation on this subject?

Let me here premise a few considerations respecting the kind of appeal which I am about to make to the Scriptures; and then my proof shall be very brief. For nothing can be plainer, than that if "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," then "the mouth of two or three witnesses" is enough to establish the point at which I aim. Of the very numerous texts, therefore, to which I might appeal, I shall select but a few; and for every attentive reader of the Bible, these may serve as a clue to all the rest.

My first remark is, that every speaker and writer, intending to be understood, employs, and *necessarily* employs, language in the same sense, in which those whom he addresses use and understand it. None will deny so plain a proposition. Nor can it be deemed less certain, that the sacred

writers designed to be understood by those whom they addressed.

My second remark is, that all the writers of the Old and New Testament were Jews; and that all the Scriptures, with very little exception, were originally addressed to Jews, or to churches which in part consisted of Jews. If we design then to come at the meaning of the sacred writers, we must necessarily construe their language in the same way as the Jews would naturally construe it, who lived in the age of the prophets and apostles. Nothing can be more plain and irrefragable, than this *maxim* of interpretation. It is no part of the inquiry, what ideas *we* may affix to the language of Scripture, coming to read it in another tongue, in another region, nurtured in the bosom of speculative philosophy, and desirous of adjusting every thing to our own standard. WHAT IDEAS DID THE PROPHETS, APOSTLES, AND EVANGELISTS MEAN TO CONVEY, is the only proper question, for one who goes simply to the law and to the testimony for the grounds of his belief.

Let us then call to mind that every Jew was habitually conversant with *expiatory sacrifices*, with *substitution;* that the system of substitution was inwrought into the very nature of his religious worship; and that all the Scripture language which has respect to the sacrifice of Christ, is directly borrowed from that which was every day used by the Jew, in speaking of the sacrifices that he was required to offer.

With these facts in view, we are ready to pre-

sent the subject, as it lies before us in the Scriptures.

Our text is fresh in your minds, and I need not here repeat it. It asserts that the "chastisement or punishment by which our peace is procured, was laid upon the Saviour; that by his wounds we are healed; that all we have gone astray, i. e. sinned; and that Jehovah hath laid on him the punishment due to us." Other parts of the chapter, from which our text is taken, repeat the same idea. "For the transgression of my people was he smitten," v. 8; "his soul [i. e. he] was made an offering for sin," v. 10; "he shall justify [i. e. procure pardon for] many, for he shall bear their iniquities," v. 11; "he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors," v. 12.

I only ask here, whether any man can rationally and candidly indulge doubts, in what manner the Jews whom the prophet addressed, must necessarily have understood this language?

In regard to the New Testament, it is so full of the doctrine in question, that the only difficulty lies in making a proper selection of testimony.

Peter has quoted some of the passages, which I have just cited. Observe how he comments on this sentiment. "Who his own self, bare our sins in his own body on the tree ..... by whose stripes ye were healed;" 1 Pet. ii. 24. Again, "We were not redeemed with corruptible things ..... but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;" 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. John the Baptist also exclaims, "Behold the Lamb of

God, which taketh away the sins of the world;" i. e. the victim, who by divine appointment is, through his expiatory death, to procure pardon for men; John I. 29. So the apostle John: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John I. 7. "Who is the propitiation [or propitiatory sacrifice] for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" 1 John II. 2. Paul abounds, every where, with the most glowing sentiments in respect to this great point. "For he hath made him to be sin [i. e. a sin offering] for us, who knew no sin;" 2 Cor. v. 21. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us;" 1 Cor. v. 7. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins;" Eph. I. 7. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [or propitiatory sacrifice] through faith in his blood ..... to declare his righteousness [i. e. for the manifestation of his pardoning mercy] by the remission of sins;" Rom. III. 25. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. III. 13.

It were easy to proceed, and fill out my whole discourse with passages of the same import. But the limits which I have prescribed to myself forbid; and I shall close with two texts more, where the resemblance between the sacrifices under the law and the offering of Christ, is so brought into view, that it is impossible to mistake the writer's meaning. "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp; wherefore, Jesus also, that he might make expia-

tion (ἁγιασῃ) for the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate;" Heb. XIII. 11, 12. In other words, what was done in the type, was fulfilled in the antitype. Again; "For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered up himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." Heb. IX. 13, 14.

I ask now of any candid man, who has any proper conception of the manner in which the Jews employed language of this nature, nothing more, than that laying his hand on his heart, and making the appeal to him who searches that heart, he would inquire, whether a Jew, addressing Jews with such language as this, could expect or wish to be understood in any other way, than as inculcating the doctrine of *substitution*, or the *expiatory sufferings* of Jesus.

I have done with citing testimony; for if what I have adduced does not establish the fact, that the sacred writers did mean to inculcate the doctrine in question; then plainly, the many scores of additional texts which might be quoted, will not prove it; nor any language, I must add, which it would be in the power of a human being to employ.

As a proof of this, I only advert to the manner in which all plain unlettered Christians have always understood these texts, from the time of the apostles down to the present moment. They never had a doubt on the subject of their meaning, unless some

speculating theologian excited it; and of themselves, I do believe, they never would have one, to the end of time.

But I may make an appeal of another kind, in regard to the manner in which this language is and must be understood, by men deeply versed in the idiom of the Scriptures, but wholly indifferent in regard to the fact, whether one or another doctrine is there taught, because they do not recognize their authority to decide upon such matters. The most distinguished oriental and biblical scholar now living, who disclaims all belief in any thing supernatural in the Scriptures, and through the influence of his philosophy maintains that a miracle is impossible, and who therefore cannot be said to have any prejudices in favour of the doctrine of atonement, says, at the close of a masterly explanation of the language of the chapter from which my text is taken, that "most Hebrew readers, who had once been acquainted with offerings and substitution, must NECESSARILY understand the words of our chapter as asserting it; and there is NO DOUBT," he adds, "that the *apostolic representation, in respect to the propitiatory death of Christ*, certainly rests in a manner altogether preeminent, on this ground." (Gesenius, Comm. über Jesaiam, LIII. 10.)

So much for the testimony of Scripture, and for the manner in which the unlearned and the learned have understood and do understand it.

We come then, if my proof is valid, to the simple alternative, either to admit the doctrine in question, or reject the authority of the sacred writers.

There is no other path which can be taken, unless it can be fairly shewn that the interpretation which has been given to the language cited above, is not agreeable to the usage of speech among the Jews; an undertaking which, I am well persuaded, is desperate; and one which no critic, no philologist, can ever accomplish; until the whole history of Jewish ideas in respect to these subjects during former ages, is blotted out from the records of the world. I repeat it then, for I do most solemnly believe it, that we must either receive the doctrine of substitution and expiatory offering by the death of Christ, or virtually lay aside the authority of the Scriptures, and lean upon our own philosophy.

III. I come now, according to the plan of my discourse, to consider some of the objections made against the doctrine of the atonement.

I do not feel it to be important, here, to dwell upon them at length. There is only one method in which any legitimate objections can be made, by those who admit the authority of revelation. This is, to shew that the language of Scripture, according to Jewish idiom, does not mean what I have construed it as meaning. But this mode of objecting, the speculators and sceptics who have rejected the doctrine of substitution, have been very careful to avoid. Their refuge is philosophy. They raise doubts about equivalency; they must see, as philosophers, the *why* and the *how* in respect to this mysterious transaction. Whatever pertains to this part of the subject, however, I have sufficiently dwelt upon already. I shall therefore only glance

here, at some of the most popular methods employed to oppose the doctrine of substitution, or to explain it away.

Obj. 1. An atonement for sin is unnecessary. God can forgive it as well without an atonement as with one; and the doctrine, if true, divests the Supreme Being of the attribute of mercy. If the full debt is paid, where is there any room for mercy in forgiving it?

But who is to decide the point, whether God *can* forgive sin without an atonement? The natural possibility of it, I admit; that is, I admit that as sovereign of the universe, and possessing omnipotence, he might pardon sin, (if he had judged it best to do so,) without the intervention of a suffering substitute. But this is no real part of our question. What *has* he judged best, is the only proper inquiry; and how can this be answered? Only, as we have already seen, by revelation. But that revelation tells us, it is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world;" that "there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, nor is there salvation in any other," Acts iv. 12; that "there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6; and that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and consequently, must be "gratuitously justified through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth as a propitiatory sacrifice." Rom. iii. 23—25.

This point then is put at rest by the Bible.

And when those who doubt, admonish us that it would be *unbecoming* in respect to the Supreme Being, and derogatory to his character, to suppose that the sufferings of Christ, an innocent victim, were deemed by him to be necessary or acceptable; I answer simply with Paul: "For it BECAME him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in order to bring many sons to glory, to make perfect the Captain of their salvation through sufferings." Heb. II. 10.

When they further allege, also, that the attribute of mercy is virtually denied to the Supreme Being, by the supposition of an atonement, they can say this only on the ground, that an exact and literal equivalent for the penal part of the divine law, both as to the kind and quantity of suffering, has been demanded of the substitute; a doctrine incapable, as we have seen, of being supported; and to meet the difficulties of which, I certainly will not incur any responsibility. The simple scriptural statement of substitution, is not liable to this objection.

OBJ. 2. The motives to strenuous effort in order to live a virtuous and holy life, are greatly weakened by the doctrine in question.

This objection is as old at least as the time of Paul; and is met by him in such a manner as to save us, at the present time, from the necessity of any effort to make an adequate reply. After representing the death of Christ (Rom. ch. III.) as the only foundation of the sinner's hope; he meets this very objection, which he knew would be made by those who doubted his doctrine, in these words: "Do we

then *make void* the law, through faith?" i. e. do we diminish the force of moral precept or obligation, by preaching the doctrine of gratuitous pardon through atoning blood? To which he answers at once; "God forbid: rather we *establish* the law;" i. e. we enforce its obligations by higher motives than before existed. After illustrating, by various instances, the fact that such a method of justifying sinners is presented to view in the Jewish Scriptures, he resumes the consideration of the objection. He represents the objector as suggesting: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid," he answers again, "how shall we who are dead to sin, any longer continue to practise it?" Rom. vi. 1, 2. He then goes on to shew, (which is indeed a most conclusive and irrefragable answer to the whole objection,) that Christianity, from its very nature, implies of necessity the mortification of all our sinful passions and appetites; it is itself, in its very essence, a principle directly hostile to them; and therefore never can indulge or foster them.

All the difficulty of objectors here, arises from overlooking the whole of this grand point. Atoning blood, extensive and gratuitous as the favours are which it proffers, never proffered one unconditionally. The sinner must be humbled, and penitent, who is sprinkled with it. The grace of God, which has appeared to all men through a Saviour's death, inculcates on them, without exception, the absolute necessity of denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts. It urges this, as the New Testament most

amply shews, by excitements to virtue of a higher nature, and by penalties for offences more awful, than any system of law could offer or impose.

Obj. 3. There is no need of laying so much stress upon the death of Christ, or of regarding him as our substitute in any sense. He may very properly be called our Saviour and Redeemer, inasmuch as by his instructions, he has taught us the way in which we may acceptably obey God.

That to give instruction was a part of Christ's errand on earth, as our Redeemer, I cheerfully admit. But that this was the great work, which marked him exclusively as the Saviour of sinners, it is quite impossible to prove. What! Have we not other instructers, such too as were inspired, as well as he? Did he write the New Testament? Did he, who taught about three years, who was never out of Palestine and made but few disciples, teach as much and labour with as much success as Paul, who preached about thirty years, and traversed the world to proclaim the messages of salvation? If the simple fact of giving instruction, of making disciples, of successfully inculcating the truth, makes a Redeemer, then who has the best title to that appellation; Paul, or (I speak it with reverence) Jesus of Nazareth? and to whom should the songs of the redeemed in heaven be directed? Have we not, too, on such ground as this, just as many redeemers as we have, or have had, religious teachers?

Obj. 4. The death of Christ was a seal or confirmation of the truth, by which we are enlightened and saved. It is unnecessary to consider what the

Scriptures say of its efficacy, as amounting to any more than this.

Is this so? Then was Stephen, and James, and Peter, and Paul, and every other martyr to the cause of truth, who has sealed his testimony to it by his own blood, our Redeemer too. Shall we then bow the knee to them for this testimony, and ascribe our salvation, at least in part, to them? And the redeemed in heaven—do they ascribe salvation to *martyrs*, when they cast their crowns at the feet of the LAMB, and sing, THOU *wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by* THY *blood?*

OBJ. 5. Christ was our Redeemer, in that he has by his example set before us an acceptable way of worship, and taught us, by personal obedience both active and passive, how we may please God.

The force of his example to inculcate virtue and piety, we ought most gratefully to acknowledge. But the *redeeming* efficacy of it, I cannot by any means admit. A most conclusive reason against such a view of it, is found in the fact, that while his example could, of course, have an influence only during his life and on times *after* those in which he lived, his atonement is represented as reaching back to the very origin of our race. Thus Paul; "If the blood of bulls and goats..... sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh; how *much more* shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. And for this cause [i. e. because his expiatory sacrifice possesses a spiritual or moral efficacy of such a na-

ture,] he is the Mediator of the new covenant, so that, his death having taken place to make expiation (εις απολυτρωσιν) for sins committed under the former covenant, they who are called may receive the promised blessings of the heavenly inheritance." Heb. ix. 13—15. That his death is here plainly considered by the apostle, as having a *retrospective* view and influence, is clear from what follows. After observing that the Jewish sacrifices needed to be often repeated, he goes on to say: "The death of Christ once only was sufficient; if this were not so," he adds, then "he must *often* have suffered *since the foundation of the world.*" That is, the object which his death has now accomplished, the expiatory sacrifice which he has now made, must be adequate for men in all ages; for the past, as well as for the future; otherwise Christ must have *often* suffered, since the foundation of the world. Heb. ix. 25, 26.

Exactly to the same purpose is the sentiment in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. After asserting that God had set forth Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice, Paul adds: "To declare or manifest his gratuitous method of justification by the forgiveness of sins in past times, [or, so that the sins of former times might be remitted,] through the divine lenity; and to declare his gratuitous method of justification, at the present time;" Rom. iii. 25, 26. The opposition of *present* time here, to the *past* in the preceding clause, shews beyond all reasonable doubt, as it seems to me, that the object of the apostle is to assert not only the influence of

Christ's propitiatory sacrifice, but its extension to past times as well as to present; and of course, the sentiment is the same with that which is disclosed in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Here then we may take a stand in defence of *vicarious* sacrifice, secure against being moved by suggestions that example is the great point in the Redeemer's work. Here, at all events, is vicarious influence, if there be influence on ages that have passed by. And that the apostle means to assert this, appears to me as clear as any other sentiment deducible from his writings.

Obj. 6. The last objection which I shall notice, is, that to represent the innocent as suffering for the guilty, is a virtual impeachment of divine equity, and of those principles of moral government which the ruler of the universe has established.

To him who acknowledges the Scriptures as a divine revelation, I reply simply in their language. "He hath made him to be a sin-offering, who *knew no sin*," i. e. the innocent has suffered for the guilty; 2 Cor. v. 21. "But Christ hath once suffered for sins, the *just* for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;" 1 Pet. iii. 18. Such is the fact; and I merely ask: Is God unjust? and do the Scriptures represent him to be so, because of this?

Even to those who do not acknowledge the authority of the Scriptures, to the sober rationalist or theist, I might present a greater difficulty still. Children suffer on account of the crimes of their parents; nations, on account of the vices of their rulers; and that without the consent of the sufferers:

yet, by their own acknowledgment, divine justice and the principles of moral government are not impeachable on this account. Are they so then, if Christ *voluntarily*, and out of pity and love, suffered the just for the unjust?

But I must leave the examination of objections. I dismiss them all with this single remark. When it shall be shewn that the language of the Scriptures must not, according to rules of interpretation which are fundamental and capable of demonstration, be construed as conveying, and as designed to convey, the idea of a vicarious or expiatory offering by the death of Christ; when it shall be shewn that there is even a possibility, that the Jews could have understood it in a different way; then we may consider the doctrine of substitution as doubtful: but never till then, unless our own conjectural reasonings are to usurp the place of the sacred writers, in deciding upon this matter.

Having canvassed the topics proposed for consideration at the commencement of my discourses, I shall close with a few reflections on the subject which has been discussed.

1. The doctrine of the atonement is a fundamental doctrine in the Christian system; and that which distinguishes it, in a peculiar manner, from all other systems of religion.

It is *fundamental;* because often as belief in a Saviour is urged in the New Testament, and urged as the indispensable condition of salvation; equally often is belief in that Saviour as our atoning sacrifice urged; and equally conspicuous is this point in

the whole system of the Christian religion. It is not merely or principally in Jesus as our teacher, our example, or as having sealed the truth of his testimony by his own blood, that we are called to believe; but principally in him, in that very character in which he was "to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, while unto them who are saved, he is wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." What says Paul to the Corinthians? "I am determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and him CRUCIFIED;" 1 Cor. II. 2. Why Christ CRUCIFIED? Why not Christ as a teacher, an example, a martyr, a prophet? Plainly because, whatever was done by Christ in all these characters, it would have utterly failed to accomplish the design of saving *men*, unless his expiatory death had also taken place. Christ *crucified*, then, is the very point on which ultimately hang all the hopes of our sinful race. So Paul viewed it, when he said; "God forbid that I should glory, save in the CROSS of Christ;" Gal. VI. 14. So we too ought to view it. Other systems of religion teach the existence, attributes, and moral government of God. This does Judaism in its modern form; this does Theism; this does even Mohammedism. Other systems inculcate our social and relative duties. The religion of Hindoostan exhibits the Deity in a state of incarnation; so that even this is not in all respects peculiar to Christianity. But no religion save the Christian, exhibits the incarnate WORD, suffering, bleeding, dying for sinners; a Lamb of God to take away

the sin of the world. This is at once the glory and the hope of the Christian system. This is what marks it with a peculiarity, that makes it exceeding distinct from, and superior to, all other systems. Give up this point, and you confound the broad line of distinction, which separates it from all else that is called religion. Suffer this sun even to be eclipsed, and the race of man is covered with gloom. Quench his glory, and we are at once involved in ten-fold more than Egyptian night; we are doomed to wander in the shadow of death, on which no morning rays will ever dawn, nor one gleam of radiance ever fall to alleviate its terrors.

2. I remark, finally, that a Saviour suffering for us, the eternal WORD, GOD manifest in the flesh, and in our nature offering an expiatory sacrifice, presents to the moral sympathies of our race, higher excitements to virtue and piety, and more powerful dissuasives from sin, than any other consideration which the Christian religion proffers.

I am quite confident, that I might safely undertake to establish the correctness of this observation, from the nature of our moral constitution, and the manner in which we are most successfully influenced to engage in the mortification of our sinful appetites, and in the practice of virtue. But I will not make such an appeal, because I choose to rest the whole subject on the Scriptures and the actual experience of Christians.

Paul when speaking on the topic now introduced, says: "God *commendeth his love toward us*, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;"

Rom. v. 8. "Greater love than this hath no man, that he lay down his life for his friends;" but Christ has far surpassed this. The same apostle, says, "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;" Rom. v. 10. Here then is a consideration which will make every heart to vibrate, that is not lost to all sense of gratitude and of mercy. How many thousands have heard the thunders of Sinai unmoved; and even while their awful power has made the very ground to rock, how many have still turned a deaf ear to all the admonitions and threatenings which they conveyed, and grown more desperate in their resolutions to persist in rebellion against God; who yet have been melted down under the proclamation of Jesus' dying love, and fallen as humble suppliants at the foot of his cross. Yes, we may say with John, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us;" 1 John III. 16. And again, "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might have life through him." But on what point did this love principally rest? Where did all the glories of benevolence concenter? The same apostle immediately informs us: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins;" i. e. when we were enemies to God, Christ died as our propitiatory offering, and made reconciliation for us; 1 John III. 9, 10. Herein is love indeed; and hard must be that heart, which can resist the proposal of it: for if any consideration can avail to

subdue the stubborn spirit of the human breast, this must be the one which has the most powerful influence of all.

I appeal to fact. When the missionaries of the United Brethren undertook to preach the eternal power and Godhead of the Deity, as displayed in the creation, to the poor benighted Greenlanders, they listened, they gazed, they turned away with silent neglect. The faithful disciples urged on them still more vehemently the attributes of the creator and judge of all, and their moral accountability to him. They listened, but their hearts remained like the eternal ice with which their region is overspread. Compassion for their perishing condition made the servants of Jesus more urgent still. One other chord there was, which perhaps when touched, might be made to vibrate. They touched it with a faithful hand. They proclaimed to the poor, gazing, perishing heathen, a Saviour, bleeding, groaning, dying for them. They pointed them to his bleeding hands, his wounded side; they bid them look to that Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. The sight prostrated them to the earth. Their stubborn hearts melted like wax before the fire. They fell at the foot of a dying Saviour's cross, and exclaimed: Lord Jesus, save us or we perish forever!

Yes, and millions of the ransomed, who have gone to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, can testify to the power of this mighty truth on their rebellious hearts. God so commended his love toward them, by disclosing a Saviour

dying on their account, that they could no longer resist the invitations of his mercy. It was a mighty stream, rushing on with overwhelming power, and bearing every thing away before it.

That Jesus died, and died for us; that he was OUR SUBSTITUTE; that his tender compassion did take us into view individually; that he took our nature in order to enter most intimately, most endearingly, into our sympathies, and propose himself to us under the most attractive form, is the view which Paul took of the Redeemer's work. He was not an isolated monument of suffering, and of God's displeasure against sinners; not merely a sign that sin could be pardoned, by which only an abstract testimony could be given, like that which the rainbow gives of God's covenant to drown the earth no more—a symbol which might have served equally well for angels or for men. No; "Verily he did not assist the angels, but the seed of Abraham." Man was the object—the only object—of his incarnation, sufferings, and death. "Wherefore it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining unto God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people. For in that he himself suffered, being tempted, he is able also to succour those that are tempted;" Heb. II. 16—18. See what pains is here taken to represent the suffering Saviour as participating in our nature, and entering with the most tender sympathy into all our wants and woes. Is this to propose him as a mere example of suffering, cold, dis-

tant, abstract; or is it to make him such a high priest as we needed, one who can be touched with a feeling for our infirmities, having been tempted in all points as we are? Speak, ye whose hearts have been melted by a Saviour's love, and tell us. Speak, ye who live amid the horrors of eternal winter and storm; and ye who roam in deserts parched beneath a burning sun; ye who were without God and without hope in the world, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, speak and say, Is not this the Saviour you need? the Saviour who has cheered your desponding hearts? who has opened to you the prospect of glory? Is not this he whom your souls love? Speak, ye redeemed, encircling his throne above, and casting your crowns at his feet; is not this he who drew your souls to him by bonds of love stronger than death; which many waters could not quench, nor floods drown? Hark! I hear the notes of that song which fills all the regions of heaven with harmony. It echoes back even to this distant world: "THOU WAST SLAIN, AND HAST REDEEMED US TO GOD BY THY BLOOD, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us kings and priests unto our God forever and ever." O for a heart and tongue to unite with this grateful, happy throng, and begin on earth the notes which we hope to sing through everlasting ages in the world above!

Fear not, my brethren, who are to preach this precious Saviour to a perishing world, fear not that the declaration of his atoning blood will ever palsy

the moral energies of the soul. What says that great apostle, who won more souls to Jesus, than any other herald of his salvation has ever done? "The love of Christ *constraineth* us." But *why* did it constrain him, and to do what? "It constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead;" i. e. it constrains us, because when we were dead in trespasses and sins, Christ died to redeem us. What follows? He died for us, "that they which live, *should henceforth no more live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and who rose again.*" Preach the same doctrine; it must forever have the same influence—the same mighty, overpowering, saving influence—on every heart that receives it. Proclaim to a perishing world *glad tidings*—glad tidings of great joy. Jesus died for them. Jesus can and will save them, if they accept the offers of his mercy. Glory in nothing but his cross. Be not turned aside from preaching him *crucified*, by any scorn and contumely on the one hand, or cold and speculative philosophy on the other. This doctrine is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe. Proclaim it then to a world perishing in iniquity. Proclaim it to the very ends of the earth. It will force open the prison doors. It will liberate the captives. It will scatter heavenly glory over our benighted world. It will call the dead to life. It will convert this great Aceldama into the garden of God. This boundless valley of dry bones will become the scene of as boundless a resurrection to life.

I thank God, whose providence has so long de-

tained me from this sacred place, that I have now enjoyed another opportunity of testifying to you my convictions in respect to a Saviour's dying love. If I should never again be permitted to do it, receive this as the last and highest expression of my affection to him and to you. I ask for no other privilege on earth, but to make known the efficacy of his death; and none in heaven, but to be associated with those who ascribe salvation to his blood. AMEN.

DR. WOODS'S

FOREIGN MISSIONARY SERMON.

THE PROFITS OF THIS SERMON WILL BE DEVOTED TO THE SUPPORT OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

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INTRODUCTION.

It seems proper that, in this place, some account should be given of the origin, and progress of that Missionary zeal, which has issued in sending messengers of peace to publish the gospel in the eastern hemisphere.

It has been often said, within a few years past, that Christians in America ought to support missions among the heathen in Africa or Asia; but the writer of these paragraphs is not able to state, whether any young man of suitable education seriously thought of engaging personally in such a mission, earlier than about four years ago. About that time some of the young men mentioned just below, while pursuing their studies in different places, and unacquainted with each other, made missions among the heathen a subject of deliberate and prayerful contemplation, and resolved to devote themselves to this service, should Providence prepare the way. They considered it doubtful, however, whether they should have an opportunity of engaging in this employment; and, in the mean time, they sedulously examined, and re-examined the subject, and used every advantage in their power to gain information respecting the state of the heathen, and the encouragement to preach the gospel among them.

In the spring of 1810, these young gentlemen, with others who joined them, disclosed their views to the Professors in the Theological Seminary at Andover, where they were then prosecuting their studies. In June following, they applied for advice and direction to the General Association of Massachusetts Proper, then sitting at Bradford. The application was made in writing, and signed by Messrs. Adoniram Judson, Samuel Nott, Samuel J. Mills, and Samuel Newell. They state the history of their views and feelings on the subject, and make several inquiries, with respect to

which they solicit the advice of their fathers in the church.

The Association appointed a Committee to make report on the application; and, in consequence of the report, proceeded to institute a Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, "for the purpose of devising ways and means, and adopting and prosecuting measures for promoting the spread of the gospel in heathen lands." The Board was composed of nine gentlemen well known to the Christian public. The Association advised the young gentlemen "to wait the guidance of Providence in respect to their great and excellent design."

The Board of Commissioners held their first meeting at Farmington, (Con.) Sept. 5, 1810. After forming a Constitution, and appointing officers, "they took measures to obtain the best information in their power, respecting the state of unevangelized nations; highly approved the readiness of the young gentlemen at Andover to enter upon a foreign mission; and advised them to pursue their studies till further information relative to the missionary field be obtained, and the finances of the institution will justify the appointment." They also prepared and published an address on the subject of missions.

The Board met again, at Worcester, Sept. 18, 1811. During the year which had elapsed, the Prudential Committee of the Board examined and approved four young gentlemen, as future missionaries to the heathen; viz. Messrs. Judson, Nott, and Newell, above named, and Mr. Gordon Hall, also a student at Andover. Mr. Mills, had not finished his theological education, and for that and other reasons was not examined with his brethren. The Committee also sent Mr. Judson to England to confer with the Board of Directors of the London Missionary Society and to procure important information on the subject of missions, which could not be so well procured in any other way. He was welcomed with great cordiality by the Directors, who engaged to take him and his three brethren under their care, and to allow them salaries, and employ them on

a mission, if the funds of the American Board should not be competent for their support.

The Board appointed the four brethren, above named, missionaries "to labor in Asia either in the Birman empire, in Surat, or in the Prince of Wales's Island, or elsewhere, as, in the view of the Prudential Committee, Providence shall open the most favorable door," and advised them "to wait the further intimation of Providence as to support from this country in the proposed Foreign Mission."

At this meeting Messrs. James Richards, and Edward Warren, students at Andover, offered themselves to the Board for the missionary service, and were approved and taken under the patronage of the Board.

The missionary brethren were, in the mean time, fitting themselves for their future arduous employment. Messrs. Newell and Hall attended courses of medical lectures, both at Boston and Philadelphia, in order to be more extensively useful among the heathen.

About the middle of last month it was found that a ship was soon to sail from Philadelphia to Calcutta. No time was to be lost. Robert Ralston, Esq. of Philadelphia, with that zeal for missions and for Christianity which he has long manifested, took an active and very friendly part in facilitating the embarkation of the young men, both by procuring passages for them on very favorable terms, and by making a generous donation. Messrs. Newell and Hall hastened to meet their brethren at Salem, where it was determined, by the Prudential Committee, to have them ordained, and to send them immediately to the field of Missionary labor. Mr. Luther Rice, who had been a student in the same Theological Seminary, was then employed as a candidate for the ministry, offered himself to the Prudential Committee to join the mission, and was approved and accepted.

The Prudential Committee sent to several neighboring churches, and convened a Council* at Salem, on

*The Council was composed of pastors and delegates from the North Congregational church in Newburyport, the Congregational church in Charlestown, and the Tabernacle church in Salem; also of the Rev. Dr.

the 6th. instant, at which time and place the *five young gentlemen* were solemnly consecrated to the service of God in the gospel Ministry among the heathen. On this occasion the following Sermon, Charge, and Right Hand of Fellowship, were delivered before a crowded and deeply affected auditory. It is confidently believed, that such impressions were made by the solemnities of the day, as will be lasting and salutary. Three of the persons ordained, viz. Messrs. Nott, Hall, and Rice, set out the same evening to go with all practicable haste to Philadelphia.* The other two sailed with their wives from Salem, on the morning of Wednesday the 19th. instant, commended by the prayers of multitudes to the gracious protection of God.†

The issue of this mission must be cheerfully left to the disposal of Him, who is the Lord of the universe, and who will ultimately establish his kingdom through the whole earth.

Griffin, pastor of Park Street church in Boston, and the Rev. Dr. Woods, Professor at Andover. The Rev. Professor Stuart was invited to attend, but was necessarily prevented.

*Mr. Nott was married on his way to Philadelphia and took his wife with him; the other two went single.

They went on board the ship Harmony, (in which they had taken their passage,) on the evening of the 18th. instant, and probably sailed from Newcastle the next morning.

† They sailed in the brig Caravan.

FEBRUARY 29, 1812.

SERMON.

PSALM lxvii.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us. THAT THY WAY MAY BE KNOWN UPON EARTH, THY SAVING HEALTH AMONG ALL NATIONS. *Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy.——Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. God shall bless us; and* ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH SHALL FEAR HIM.

CAN any real Christian be a stranger to the enlarged views, the benevolent desires, and pleasing anticipations of the pious author of this Psalm? It cannot surely be necessary to inform my audience that every true worshipper of God resembles him in love, and can be satisfied with nothing short of all that infinite love designs. The Christian has a heart to feel for his fellow creatures. He takes into account their temporal comfort, and endeavors to promote it;—their temporal wants and sufferings, and does what in him lies to relieve them. But, when their spiritual interest is before him; when he contemplates the value of

their souls, and the prospect which the gospel opens of immortal happiness in the world to come; his bowels of compassion are moved; his tenderest affections kindled; pure and heavenly love pervades and warms his soul. He longs for the eternal felicity of his kindred and friends, of his country and the world. His hearts desire and prayer to God is, that *all men may be saved*,—that all human beings may forsake their evil ways, and turn to the Lord; that his kingdom may come, and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. With this holy affection reigning in his heart, the fervent, devoted Christian presents himself a living sacrifice unto God; and counts it a privilege to do and to suffer any thing for the advancement of his cause. He is ready to "endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory." In this state, no difficulty discourages; no danger alarms. The sacrifice of property and pleasure; stripes, imprisonment, and death, lose their terrors, and become more attractive, than any earthly good. He is as steady to his purpose, as resolute, active, and patient in pursuit, as the restless miser, or the ambitious conqueror. And as their desire of wealth and of conquest is insatiable and unbounded; so is his desire for the diffusion of Christian knowledge and happiness. Every degree of success attending the dispensation of the gospel, even a single instance of conversion among the weakest and meanest of mankind, yields him the purest pleasure. But this pleasure only increases desire. His enjoyment of the good already attained urges him on to the pursuit of more. The progressive enlargement of the kingdom of Christ will constantly enlarge the benevolence of his heart. While there is a nation or tribe under heaven not sub-

dued to Christ; the enlightened, fervent Christian cannot rest. His unalterable object is, *that the knowledge of the Lord may fill the earth. His heart beats high for the conversion of the world.*

This, my dear brethren, is the true spirit of our holy religion. This is the affection which glows in every new born soul. This is the principle which governs and animates the church of Christ.

I shall not make it my business to prove the *existence* of an affection so diffusive and generous, in the hearts of Christians. Nor shall I endeavor to entertain you with ingenious speculations on the theory of benevolence, nor with florid declamations on its beauty. These would be as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.—On this new and very interesting occasion, my object is *to rouse you to* BENEVOLENT EXERTION. I would persuade you to act, decidedly and zealously to act under the influence of Christian love. I would excite you by motives which no follower of Christ can resist, TO MAKE THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL, AND THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD, THE OBJECT OF YOUR EARNEST AND INCESSANT PURSUIT.

My *first motive* is THE WORTH OF SOULS. Man, a creature of yesterday, frail as the tender grass, is made for IMMORTALITY. The lamp which the Lord hath lighted up in his breast, will burn forever. The mind will be ever vigorous and active. No labor can exhaust it. No length of ages can waste its vigor. No pressure of guilt or suffering can destroy its activity. Such a mind, destined to exist and act forever, destined to the bliss of heaven, or the pains of hell, lives in every human being, in the savage as well as in the citizen; in the heathen as well as in the Christian; in the Hindoo, the Chinese, and the Hottentot, as well as the polished European or American.—In

the name of him who died on Calvary, I call upon you, O Christians, to labor for the salvation of beings that will never die. Of what consideration is their nation, climate, color, language, government, education, manners? Here all distinctions vanish. Learned and ignorant, refined and rude, honorable and base, are all on a level in point of accountableness to God and immortality of soul. Rise then above all the distinctions which misguide our judgments and our hearts, and seek the salvation of this *great family of immortals*.

In some favored hours of divine illumination, have you not seen, have you not felt the ineffable preciousness of your own souls? Have you not cast away every thing as dross for eternal salvation? And has not the grace of God taught you to love your neighbor as yourselves? See the poor, degraded Africans. See the thousands of children sacrificed in the Ganges. See the throngs of miserable pilgrims pressing forward to devote themselves to the impure and sanguinary worship of Moloch. *The souls of all these are as precious as your own.* The wisdom of God,—the blood of the dying Savior has so declared. Do you love *your own* souls, then? and will you not love *theirs?*—Change places with them. Put yourselves in their condition, and them in yours.—You are then spending your life in a land of darkness, ignorant of God, slaves to the basest superstition and most hateful vices. Moved by pity and love, they send a herald of the cross to preach salvation in your ears. He comes and speaks to you of Jehovah and his law; discloses your guilt, and points you to the judgment day. He preaches to you Jesus, the Savior of sinners. With trembling, bleeding hearts, you go to the Savior, and he gives you rest. How great the salvation! How happy your state! Would

you not forever exalt the Redeemer's name? Would you not love and thank the messenger of his grace, and those who sent him? Now, if salvation would be so great a blessing to you, why not to those who are actually in the condition here supposed? And if you would love and thank those who sought your salvation, why not secure to yourselves the same love and gratitude from heathens saved by your labors?

Imagine the souls of your kindred in pagan darkness, having never heard the name of Immanuel. Imagine your children, parents, brothers, sisters this moment in the midst of India, worshippers of the horrid idol Juggernaut. Would not your hearts leap for joy to see these dear young ministers going to teach them the way of life? Would any thing be too precious to part with in order to animate their zeal, and help them to rescue from ignorance and ruin the objects of your love? But have not the Indians souls as precious as the souls of your kindred?—Nay rather, they are themselves your kindred; allied to you by the ties of a common nature; offspring of the same heavenly Father; children of the same family. In every human being you see a brother or a sister. O forget not the partners of your blood! Send some of your Bibles and preachers to your dear kindred in ASIA.

The *second motive* by which I urge you to seek the conversion of all mankind is THE PLENTEOUSNESS OF THE PROVISION WHICH CHRIST HAS MADE FOR THEIR SALVATION. Were there any thing scanty in this pro-
on,—any deficiency in divine grace,—any thing
umscribed in the evangelic offer; our zeal for prop-
ting the gospel would be suppressed; the tongue
hand of Christian charity would be paralized. But
brethren, the word of eternal truth has taught us
Jesus tasted death for every man; that he is the pro-

pitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the *whole world;* that a rich feast is prepared, and all things ready; that whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely. This great atonement is as sufficient for Asiatics and Africans, as for us. This abundant provision is made for them as well as for us. The door of Christ's kingdom is equally open to them and to us. Unnumbered millions of our race have entered in; and yet there is room. The mercy of God is an ocean absolutely exhaustless; and so far as his benevolence is a pattern for our imitation, and a rule to govern our exertions and prayers, *he wills that all men should be saved.* Christians, you have, then, full scope for your pious benevolence and zeal. In your labors and prayers for the salvation of men, you cannot go beyond the bounds fixed for you by the Savior himself. You are not straitened in God. You have no occasion to fear that in this cause your zeal and activity will exceed the abundance of grace. You have a warrant from God to strive for the salvation of the whole world. And wherever the preaching of the cross shall stir up them that are lost to seek salvation, there salvation will be found. Persuade the whole empire of Birmah, and China, and all the East to come to the gospel supper, and they will all be supplied;—to enter into the kingdom, and they will all be admitted. Every perishing sinner on earth would find the same welcome with yourselves. In any country or corner of the world, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst; I the Lord will hear them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them." Remember then, Christians, you cannot exhaust the mercy of God. Exert yourselves to the utmost for the salvation of mankind; your exertions will fall far below

the height of redeeming love. Its length and breadth will infinitely transcend your largest benevolence.

The third motive I shall present, is THE COMMAND OF OUR LORD;—"GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE." This command is an exact expression of the heart of Jesus; a display of the *vastness* of his love. It would be very easy to show that the obligation of this command is not to be confined to the twelve apostles. It is limited to no age or nation. The command is binding upon Christians "always even to the end of the world." The reasons which moved the apostles to preach the gospel to every creature, remain in full force. Nations without the gospel are as wretched now as they were then. Their salvation is as necessary, as important, and as easily accomplished.

Will any say *this command is obligatory upon the ambassadors of Christ, and not upon private Christians?* It is indeed the duty of ambassadors of Christ to go and preach the gospel to all the world. The Messiah is given to be a light to the Gentiles. The Gentiles must be enlightened in the doctrine of salvation. They *must* hear the glad tidings. "But how can they hear without a preacher? And how can they preach, except they be sent?" If ministers *must go forth*, the christian world *must send* them. If they must devote their life to the business of evangelizing the heathen, the Christian world *must support them*.

Does the thought arise, that the apostles went forth ithout such support? They did;—for there was no ristian nation or church, overflowing with wealth, support them. But whatever their peculiar circumnces obliged them to do, the general maxim which y laid down was, "*that no man goeth a warfare his own charges.*"

But I cannot stop to reason. I make my appeal to your generosity. Those who go to teach your brethren in pagan lands, must be maintained. But at present they cannot receive maintenance there. The heathen must be converted, and formed into christian societies, before adequate provision for the ministers of Christ can be expected from them. Will you then see your missionaries, who have left all to preach the gospel of peace among the poor heathen, reduced to the necessity of abandoning their sacred office, and engaging in servile labor for their daily bread? Will you see your apostles, the ambassadors of peace from America, clothed in rags, and compelled to beg or starve? And must they tell the heathen that they are thus forsaken of their christian brethren, who have enough and to spare?

It is too obvious to need any farther illustration, that the christian community at large has a deep concern in the command of Christ, "to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." I urge this command of our risen Savior, as absolutely obliging you to *seek the conversion of the world.* The universal spread of the gospel, and the salvation of the ends of the earth is a business in which every christian ought to take a part. This gracious injunction was given by our Lord just before he ascended into heaven. It was a most memorable occasion. He had finished his work on earth, and was about to return to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God. He knew the superabounding grace which flowed from Calvary; the ruined state of man, and the saving power of his cross. All nations and ages were before him. Then, with the love and authority of the King of Zion, he gave the command, *to evan-*

gelize all nations. And can any one who has the heart of a christian, or of a man, refuse obedience?

My *fourth motive* is derived from THE CONDUCT OF THOSE WHO RECEIVED THIS COMMAND, AND OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES IN SUCCEEDING TIMES. The apostles "*went forth, and preached every where.*" They travelled into various parts of the idolatrous world, preaching the gospel to the poor;—planting and watering churches; and encountering fierce and cruel persecutions. In all their journeyings, labors, and sufferings, their invariable object was, that *God's way might be known upon earth, and his salvation to all nations.*

The same spirit appeared in the primitive churches. Under the first sermon which was preached after the ascension of Christ, three thousand were converted. What was the fruit of their conversion? We are immediately told that "they who believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all as every one had need." From time to time the churches and individual christians assisted the apostles in their journies, and contributed in various ways to the propagation of the christian religion.

How excellent the spirit of the apostles, and of those early converts to the christian faith! Can you help feeling the attraction of such examples? Will you not imitate those who beheld the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and received of his fulness? Shall the first apostles and martyrs of christianity be forgotten? Read the history of their self-denying labors, their deprivations and sacrifices, their patience under reproach and torture, and their inextinguishable zeal for the salvation of sinners.

Read too the history of what has in later times been done by the missionaries of Christ in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. And consider that it was owing to Missionary labors, that your distant ancestors were delivered from their idols, and entrusted with those sacred oracles which they have transmitted to you. While you revolve these things, do not your hearts burn within you? Do you not look with admiration upon the faithful messengers of grace? and do you not *long* to be partakers of their labors and sufferings, their success, and their crowns of glory?

My fifth motive is derived from the PECULIAR DESIGN OF CHRISTIANITY IN CONTRADISTINCTION TO JUDAISM, AND ITS ADAPTEDNESS TO BE A UNIVERSAL RELIGION. Brethren, we are not disciples of Judaism. But have we not had too much of its limited and exclusive spirit? Have we not thought it enough to enjoy the scriptures and the ministers of religion among ourselves, without any care to send them to other nations? But why should we indulge feelings so adverse to the Christian dispensation, and limit that, which its divine author has left unlimited? Why should we engross a religion to which all nations have an equal right, and which is adapted to universal use? As well might we think of engrossing the common light and air.

The doctrines of Christianity are applicable to all men; because all have the same nature, and stand in the same relation to God and to one another. The laws of Christianity are suited to govern mankind of every nation and climate. These laws rest on general principles, and extend equally to the whole human race. The corruptions which they require us to subdue, are found in every child of Adam. The repent-

ance, faith, and holiness, which they demand, are equally the duties of all nations. All the promises, ordinances, and blessings of the gospel, would be as precious to renovated pagans, as they are to us.—Why should we withhold such a religion from the unnumbered millions who people the eastern world? We will not, brethren. We, who profess to believe and love christianity, will not adopt principles and measures so contrary to its celestial nature, and its diffusive, benign tendency.

My *sixth motive* is derived from PROPHECY. My brethren, has not the notion often insinuated itself into our minds, that all has been done which can be done for the conversion of the world, and that things are likely to remain much as they are? Or if we have not admitted this in theory, has it not been our *practical sentiment?* When we have looked upon the millions of men who are uncivilized, degraded, without God and without hope, are we not prone to give up their conversion as hopeless? And if it is not the language of our lips, is it not of our feelings, that the kingdom of Christ will stop where it is; that the obstacles in the way of christianizing the nations of the earth are too great to be surmounted; and that the most we can expect is to maintain the ground already secured. To raise you above this sinking discouragement and indolence, I will open to you THE PROPHETIC PAGE. "He shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied." "*It is a light thing* that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel;—*I will also give thee for* A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES, *that thou mayest be my salvation to* THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. ASK OF ME, AND I WILL GIVE THEE THE HEATHEN FOR THINE INHERITANCE, AND THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH FOR THY

POSSESSION. Thus saith the Lord God; *behold I will lift up my hand to* THE GENTILES, *and set up my standard to the people.*—ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD." Shall these glorious predictions fail of accomplishment? Shall these unchangeable decrees of the Almighty be frustrated?—Heaven and earth shall pass away, but *not one jot or tittle of these promises shall fail.* The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

When we survey the idolatrous, blind, barbarous nations of the world, our courage flags; and we ask, with desponding hearts, *can these dry bones live?*—We forget the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who fainteth not, neither is weary. We forget that all nations are in his hands; that he fashioneth them as he pleaseth.—Because *the conversion of the world* is beyond *our* power, we think it beyond the power of GOD. Well might Christ say to us, "*Oh ye of little faith!*"—Did Paul indulge such despondency when he conferred not with flesh and blood; but with the ardor of a young convert, and the fearless fidelity of an apostle, preached the word of God in Greece, in Asia, and in Rome? Did Wickliffe indulge such feelings? Did Luther? Did Swartz, Eliott, Brainerd?—Away with every hesitating, unbelieving thought! Is the Lord's arm shortened that it cannot save? Is his grace exhausted?—The great design of God is not yet accomplished. He who died and lives again, *is not yet satisfied.* Eighteen hundred years ago he said;—"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men unto me.*" And he said, more than two thousand years ago; *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth;* for I am God, and there is none else."—This word has not returned unto him void. The whole Christian world

testifies, that *it has been astonishingly efficacious.*—It will be still more efficacious. The word of the Lord does not grow old and decay; but is ever new and powerful. Its accomplishment is gradual, sometimes slow, but always sure. To him, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years, the things which he has foretold or determined, are as certain as though actually accomplished.

Do you then begin to cast your eye over the world, and ask; *How can those benighted places be illuminated? How can those depraved wretches be converted? How can the deaf hear, and the dumb sing?*—My friends, this is *the very design* of the gospel. These are *the very effects* which it is fitted to produce.

Do you still hesitate, and yield to fear, thinking, with gloom and discouragement, that although eighteen centuries of the Christian Era have passed away, the greater part of the world is yet in Mahometan or pagan darkness; thinking, too, how few ministers we have even for ourselves; how difficult it is to instruct even a small number of heathens, and to guard them from apostasy, when they become proselytes; how difficult to civilize savages; how little all past exertions have effected; and that we are not to look for miraculous operations. Is this the state of your minds? And when you hear God, by the mouth of a prophet, declaring; "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen;" do you again despondingly inquire; "how can this *great work be done?*—Such unbelief is a dishonor to God.—Do you say, *we must keep the ground, which our religion has already gained?*—The best way to do this is,

to gain more.—Do you say, *we have but few ministers for our own country?*—*Multiply* them, then, by giving part to the heathen. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

Why should you ask how this great work of converting the nations *can be done?* I might ask you, *how could* the earth and all its inhabitants be created? *How could* the heavens be stretched out as a curtain over your heads? What power is it that sustains the world, and causes all its motions and changes? Do you talk of POWER? The GOD who forms a blade of grass, and begets a drop of dew, *can as easily convert a soul?* And he who converts one soul, can as easily convert a nation.—Every day, in the midst of heathen lands, God exerts a power sufficient to save the universe. Who gives to the pagans life and breath, reason and conscience? Who causes *their* sun to shine, and their ground to yield its fruits?—Say no more, then; how can the great work of converting the nations be done? IT IS ONLY FOR GOD TO SPEAK THE WORD. He can cause all Asia to bow to his grace, as easily as he can shake the leaves of the forest.—And as to miraculous operations, we will only ask of God to repeat among the heathen the same miracle that was wrought in christianizing your ancestors; the same that was wrought in bringing to the foot of the cross every believer who sees the light of heaven.

My hearers, I must not detain you. But I cannot forbear to hint at THE OPERATIONS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE AT THE PRESENT TIME. The events of these last days are highly animating to the hopes of Christians. The Lord has given the word, and great has been the company of the publishers. A large number of ministers of different denominations, moved by the

love of souls, have labored in the gospel where Christ had not been named. The multiplication of Bible Societies in Great Britain and America, the liberality and zeal they have displayed, and the success which has crowned their unconfined operations, have exceeded the most sanguine hopes; and we are now reaching forward to the blessed time when the various nations of the Eastern world, and the Islands of the sea, will read in their own tongues the words of eternal life.—I mention, as another favorable sign of the present times, that facilities for the pious education of youth and for the general diffusion of Christian knowledge are greatly increased.—Another most delightful omen is the effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the consequent revival of religion in several of our Colleges, and in a great number of our churches and Societies in different parts. At the same time the attention of christians is roused, in an unparalleled degree, to the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

My feelings also constrain me to speak of it as a circumstance highly encouraging, that among the friends of evangelical religion greater love and harmony have begun to appear. Christians of different denominations,—Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Moravians, new divinity men, and old divinity men, have all been more or less disposed to attach too much importance to the points in which they differ from each other. They have had party spirit. They have had narrow prejudices. They have often been more forward to proselyte to their own sect, than to Christ;—to set up themselves, than to do justice to others. They have had contention, and strife, and evil speaking among them. They have injured the truth by discussing *the important subjects* of disagreement without due meekness and candor, and by

laying out too much strength on those which are unimportant. These things I say honestly, and in the fear of God. Christians have wanted some grand object to seize their hearts and engage all their powers;—some great and common cause in the promotion of which they might be effectually purified from error and find a grave for all their jealousies and animosities; and in which the eternal truths of Revelation might be maintained with unyielding firmness, and propagated with augmented and unconquerable zeal.—The SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL and THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD constitute *the very object* wanted,—*the common cause* which ought to unite, and has already begun to unite the affections, prayers, and labors of the great family of christians. This harmonizing spirit among the followers of Christ forebodes good to Zion. O may it increase, and diffuse its happy influence, till christians of every name shall be so completely occupied with *the Redeemer's cause*, as to forget *their own*.

Even the civil revolutions and convulsions, and the desolating wars of the present day, need not dishearten. For they are not only suited to withdraw our affections from the perishable things of this world, and fix them on the immoveable kingdom of God; but are themselves presages of the church's prosperity. The Lord shook all nations just before the Desire of all nations came. He has arisen now to shake terribly the earth; and we expect the spiritual coming of Christ, and the millennial glory of the church, will soon follow.

All the passing events of the civil and religious world, in connexion with prophecy, indicate the approach of better days. In many instances this favorable tendency of things is obvious; and where it is not, we should be equally strong in faith. God loves the church;

and will make all things contribute to its welfare. At all times he keeps a steady eye upon the kingdom of grace. In all his works, *this* is the object most dear to him. Compared to this, the interests of earthly kingdoms are nothing. He will build up nations or cast them down, cause convulsions and wars, or give tranquillity, as he sees will be most conducive to the extension and final glory of the church.

Dear brethren, can you pursue a more excellent object *than the spread of the Gospel and the conversion of the world?* I have endeavored to excite you to this pursuit by a variety of motives, derived from the worth of immortal souls, and the plenteousness of the provision which Christ has made for their salvation; from the express command of our Lord; from the example of those who first received it, and of others who followed them; from the peculiar design of christianity, and its adaptedness to be a universal religion; from the spirit of prophecy; and from the operations of divine Providence at the present day. Are you not persuaded by these motives, and others which will readily occur to you, to give yourselves to this great work? Are you not resolved to *do* every thing, *to part* with every thing, to *submit* to every thing, to forward this glorious design of filling the earth with the knowledge of the Lord? *Yes*, I trust many of you say—*we are persuaded; we are resolved. We feel that we are not our own. Lord, what wilt thou have us to do? We will no longer live to ourselves, but to him who died for us, and rose again. Lord, make use of our talents, our substance, our labors, our sufferings for the welfare of thy church; for the salvation of those who are perishing in sin.—If we forget thee Oh Jerusalem, let our right hand forget her cunning.*

DEAR YOUNG MISSIONARIES,

I trust these feelings are yours. You have devoted your lives to the work of making known among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. We know you do not leave your native land, because you have not the fairest prospect of reputation, usefulness, and comfort here. You go, we believe, because the love of God is shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost. We fondly look upon you, as chosen vessels unto Christ, to bear his name before the Gentiles. Blessed be the Lord God of the Gentiles, that he hath put this design into your hearts. The cause in which you have enlisted, is the cause of divine love. You have chosen the noblest and most honorable work on earth; more honorable than the laurels of conquerors, or the diadems of kings. But it is also arduous and perilous. Who is sufficient to do the work of an apostle to the heathen? When you have seriously contemplated the greatness of this work, you have often cried out; "Lord, if thy presence go not with us, carry us not hence." I hope you will never forget, that *without Christ*, you can do nothing. Without the help of Christ, you can no more advance his kingdom among idolaters, than you can scatter midnight darkness by a word. He that planteth is nothing, and he that watereth is nothing. The increase is wholly of God. Without his assistance, you will not only fail of success, but of fidelity and perseverance. If you should be forsaken of God, what would your conduct be? and what would become of your mission?—The precious name of Jesus would be blasphemed among the pagans. Your light would go out in darkness. Shame and blushing would cover the faces of your patrons and friends; and their hearts would die within them. The bright and celestial flame, which has been kindling up

among us,—how would it be extinguished!—My dear friends, I would not distress you;—but you know this would be the dreadful result of your mission, if the special help of God should not be granted you. But if you go forth in the strength of Christ, you will be burning and shining lights in regions of darkness and death.—We hope to hear good tidings of great joy from the EAST.—Your personal exertions can indeed go but a little way. But be not discouraged on this account. Think how it will be in Asia a century or two hence. The kingdom of Christ, which you are sent to promote toward the rising of the sun, will be like a little leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened. It will be like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth. But when it is sown it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth forth great branches, so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it. In some chosen regions, the Lord enable you to plant this precious seed. To see young men, who have been my beloved pupils, faithfully preaching Christ among the heathen, shall be *my joy and my crown*. Oh may the first fruits of our Seminary in pagan lands be to the praise of the glory of divine grace.

Dear young men, I will not break your hearts and my own by dwelling on the affecting circumstances of this parting scene. If you *must* go, I will animate and comfort you. Remember, then, though *we* must leave you, HE, whom your soul loveth, will not. The God, you will worship on the plains of Hindostan, will be the same God, whom you have here worshipped in our Seminary, in the Sanctuary, and in the closet. The Savior, whom you will adore and trust

in *there*, will be the very Savior, whose glory you have seen, and of whose fulness you have received *here*.—Go then, dear missionaries, with the partners of your life, the objects of your tenderest affection; and may God Almighty be your Preserver. Go, and remember you are not your own. Go, and "declare the glory of the Lord among the heathen, his wonders among all people." Esteem the *reproach* of Christ greater riches, than all the wealth of India. The parents and friends you leave behind will never, never forget you, till their hearts are cold in death. Our earnest affections and prayers will constantly attend you. We shall share with you, in every peril you will encounter by sea and by land. All the success you obtain, and all the joy you partake, will be *ours*. Every sorrow that melts you, and every pang that distresses you, will also be *ours*. We shall often meet you at the mercy seat, where you and we may find grace to help in time of need. You will be as dear to our hearts, and as near to God and to heaven in Asia, as in America.—If we are friends of God, our separation will not be forever; At the glorious appearing of the Son of God, we hope to see you, dearly beloved, and those whom your labors may rescue from pagan darkness, *at his right hand*. The God of mercy grant, that we may then join with you, and with a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who will stand before the throne and before the Lamb, and cry with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God, who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.—With this joyful anticipation, I do, my dear friends, cheerfully, and most affectionately, bid you, farewell.

Brethren and friends, these dear young men are going to preach to the heathen that religion, which is

your comfort in life, your hope in death, your guide to heaven. Consider yourselves now looking upon them for the last time, before you shall meet them at the tribunal of Christ. Assist them in their arduous office by your substance, and by your prayers. Bear them on your hearts when you draw near to God. The decisions of the judgment day will show, how cold has been our warmest zeal, how trifling our best exertions, how languid our most fervent prayers, compared to the greatness of the object now before us.—The Lord of the universe, in these last days, is about to do a marvellous work; a work of astonishing power and grace. The time of his glory is come. He will soon destroy all idol worship. The thrones of wickedness he will level with the dust. He will dissipate the gross darkness, which covers the nations. He will send out his light and truth, shed down his quickening Spirit, and renovate the world. The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. My hearers, God offers you the privilege of aiding in this great work of *converting the nations;*—a work, which he has reserved to these *last, best* days;—a work, which the holy apostles would almost wish to live again to promote; and in which the hosts of heaven exceedingly rejoice. The God of love offers you the honor and happiness of taking a part in *this blessed work.* Nothing else is worth living for. But who would not live, labor, and die for this?—"Arise, shine, Oh Zion, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.—And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Amen.

THE

CHARGE.

DELIVERED BY SAMUEL SPRING, D.D.

Pastor of the North Congregational Church in Newburyport.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

WHILE we recollect this memorable direction of Christ to his chosen Missionaries, *Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature:* while we also survey the perishing state of five hundred millions of souls in Asia, who are destitute of the appointed means of salvation, we are alarmed at the neglect with which they have long been treated. For we hear our merciful God emphatically say, *Whom shall I send, and who will go for us*, to enlighten and rejoice them with the glad tidings of salvation?—But blessed be his glorious name, who has the hearts of all men in his hand, and directs their destinations, *you, my Brethren*, in the view of these Divine interrogations, have promptly answered, *Here we are, Lord, send us;* we are willing to accept the important mission. We will, by the aid of thy gracious providence, take the parting hand of our parents, brothers and sisters, and other dear friends; we will bid farewell to our native land, and cross the wide ocean to Asia, for the sake of preaching Christ to thousands and millions of our fellow mortals, who never heard of the Savior. While we are willing to ascend to heaven from that distant clime, we hope, by the grace of God, to be happily successful in pointing the way to some, if not to many of the Pagans, who will, without seasonable instruction, perish for ever.—For how shall they hear without a preacher?

This, if you know your own hearts, is your object; and we charitably hope you are not deceived, though "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

With your readiness to embrace a foreign embassy to the heathen, the Board of Commissioners, and many devout Christians are deeply, and it is hoped, thankfully impressed: and to qualify you for the regular execution of it, the Council appointed by the Prudential Committee have invested you with the office of Christ's ministers, by prayer and the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery.

Being then *the ordained* ministers of Christ, it is expected, agreeably to the established order of the Christian church on these solemn occasions, that you now receive the word of exhortation, or the usual charge, which I am appointed to administer in the name and behalf of the Council.

Dear Brethren, whether you are duly qualified for the mission, does not, you are sensible, depend either on your opinion, or on ours; but on Christ's who searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men, and will soon reveal the real character of every one before the assembled universe. At this interesting moment, then, you will, if Christians, renewedly consecrate your souls and bodies, and all that you possess, to the Lord, and solemnly engage to be faithful ministers of the New Testament, among the Heathen nations and tribes *especially*, wherever he shall cast your lot and direct your exertions. While then enlisting under the banner of the Cross in this public manner, to preach the Gospel to the perishing world, you cannot but remember that you will displease and dishonor Christ, that you will injure your own souls and the souls of the heathen, unless you sacrifice pride, ambition, personal

honor and emolument, and every private consideration, to the glory of God in the salvation of souls. For if human distinction, or self gratification, in *any form whatever*, be adverse to Christianity, it is directly, yea, it is totally, hostile to the character and office of Christian missionaries. To obey Christ, and imitate his apostles, those faithful and successful missionaries, who in the course of a few years confounded the adversary and his bold adherents, by spreading the light of the Gospel over the extensive regions of the East, you must be the subjects of deep humilty and *much self-denial*. One man cannot serve two masters. He cannot serve God and mammon. He cannot seek his own glory and the glory of Christ. You must *practise* self-denial among the heathen in a *conspicuous manner*, before you can inculcate it with advantage and success. *They*, by your pious conduct, must be convinced that your religion, that your God, is preferable to theirs, before they will forsake idolatry and embrace the Gospel of Christ. It will be fruitless to tell them about invisible things, about Heaven and Hell, eternal happiness and eternal misery, if they do not see in your christian conduct what they ought to imitate. You will spend your breath and time in vain, except you let them see the real expression of godliness in your uniform example. The eyes of the Heathen, you will note, rather than their ears, are the avenues by which you can readily have access to their hearts. You must let them see Christ in his missionaries, before they will attentively and patiently hear you display his moral excellency. If you shew them how Christ and his Apostles lived, by living like them, in a meek, humble, and heavenly manner, you may then preach his doctrines. This, then, we emphatically charge you, never, never preach the theory of the Gospel, till you have present-

ed the practice of the Gospel in your own godly example. To you, who are Christ's embassadors, the poor ignorant creatures will look for the character of the crucified and exalted Redeemer: and if they see him not in you, they will despise you and turn away from your instructions to the practice of idolatry. And woe unto you, if you be found deficient in this respect. But, my brethren, we hope better things of you, and things which accompany salvation, though we thus speak. You *will* then be exemplary, you *will magnify* your office, and let no man, no heathen, despise your youth.

In adapting your instructions to the heathen, you will exercise much wisdom and discretion. We make this remark because many missionaries have proved unsuccessful among the heathen, by crowding them with strong meat even before they were prepared for milk. The pagan empire is an empire of ignorance, delusion, and superstition. They know *less than nothing* relative to the glorious provisions of the Gospel. When you, therefore, begin to instruct them, it will be necessary to give them the most simple and easy lessons in the rudiments of Christianity. When you also attempt to feed them with the bread of life, it must be discreetly served in morsels only. For you will find even the hopeful converts but mere babes, who can digest nothing but milk, which must also be given in small quantities. You will be instant in season, out of season, both in public and from house to house, or from cottage to cottage, in opening to them, according to their apprehension, the being and perfections of God, the divinity of scripture, the contents of his law, the apostasy of man, the necessity and nature of the atonement, the method and the condition of salvation pointed out by Christ in the Gospel.

If God shall succeed and bless your labors of love among the heathen, in multiplying hopeful converts, you will establish churches, break to them the bread of life, and apply the seal of the covenant to the children and domestics of believers, agreeably to the practice of Abraham the father of the faithful, and the subsequent friends of truth, who tread in his steps. In forming churches, you will cautiously admit those, and those only, who exhibit credible evidence that they are the subjects of God's special grace in regeneration. For, if like the degraded priests in the anterior dispensation, you omit making a proper difference between the holy and unholy, between Christians and sinners, you will depreciate the dignity and influence of the Church, and offend Christ, who provides sacramental symbols for his own children, and not for his enemies. We give you this early exhortation, lest, like some elated pompous missionaries, you be tempted to exhibit a more flattering account of converts among the heathen than will bear the test, when God shall make a separation in the final decision between the righteous and the wicked.

Let us, my friends and brethren, act before Christ the searcher of hearts in reference to this object on the principle of integrity. When you transmit to us the state and success of your mission, tell us the simple truth, and nothing but the truth, and then you will honor God, and we shall repose entire confidence in your narratives.

We need not remind you that the object and the consequences of your mission are inestimably important, both to you, the church, and a multitude of souls. No enterprise comparable to this, has been embraced by the American church. All others retire before it like the stars before the rising sun. The success of

the mission, we know depends upon the general aid of Divine Providence and God's special grace. If this is the appointed time for Christ to have the heathen of Asia for his inheritance, or only to prepare the way for his glory in that extensive region of pagan darkness and ignorance, the mission will probably be crowned with success. But you know, my friends, from your intimate acquaintance with the history of missionary exertions, that much depends upon the wisdom and fidelity of the missionaries. Though the conversion of heathens is the special work of God, yet we must remember that he expects the concurrence of faithful and able ministers of the Gospel. God does not operate alone: and as no miracles are expected, the poor ignorant heathen will be lost, unless seasonably instructed with line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, by faithful and discreet missionaries. How vast, then, your obligations to help the Lord with all your might? The object you have embraced is unspeakably great: you feel the pressure of it when you lie down and when you rise up: but the motives to encourage and support your trembling hearts are answerably great. God has already begun his glorious work in the East. The morning star has appeared, and indicates the near approach of the rising sun. *God will*, his praying children *believe*, succeed and prosper the mission. You will go under the guidance of Christ, the Almighty Savior, and will be supported by his right hand. God will not forsake you, unless you forsake him.

But here pause a moment, and count the cost of your enterprise. Are you to expect unremitting prosperity? Are you to expect no hardships, no perils, no discouragements, no disappointments, and no adversity? Alas!

you know better. You are to expect much adversity, much opposition, many dark days, when your hearts will swell with grief. You have doubtless made your calculations to meet with many adverse seasons of very different descriptions. The days of sorrow you must experience. These are the lot of useful men. The endearing connexions you have formed as a band of missionary brothers; and the connubial connexions you have uprightly made, must soon be dissolved. You expect to meet the bitter cup of sorrow, as well as the cheerful cup of joy and consolation: for God has so decreed. But will you faint in the day of adversity? Will you, after solemnly putting your hand to the plough, look back? *Will you also go away?* No: no my brothers: You will rather say with the faithful disciples, *Lord, to whom shall we go, but unto thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life.* We also say, no: look not back but forward with vigorous faith. Trust in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. In the hours of affliction remember Christ and his afflicted Apostles, while executing your arduous mission. Remember the martyrs enrolled on the Divine page. Remember particularly those blessed men arrayed in white robes, and let the recording angel attach your names to the register. *For these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb—and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

In a word; let the Lord be your portion, and Christ your leader and confidence; let grace be your speech, and humility your dress; let secret and social prayer be your breath; the glory of God in the salvation of souls your object, and heaven your final rest. Go,

then, with the tender companions of your bosoms, like pilgrims and strangers, and lay your bodies by the side of Ziegenbalg and Swartz, that you may meet them and Eliot and Brainerd, and all other faithful missionaries, in the realms of light, and so be ever with the Lord. We, in the mean time, will pray, that the salvation of souls may be your joy, and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord. Amen.

THE

RIGHT HAND

OF

FELLOWSHIP.

BY SAMUEL WORCESTER, D.D.

Pastor of the Tabernacle Church in Salem.

GOD IS LOVE. The Divine Persons of the adorable TRINITY inhabit eternity in affection and fellowship infinitely high and blessed. Holy angels, in their different orders, all dwell in love, and dwell in God. Man was originally formed for the same exalted happiness; but he fell by transgression into enmity and misery. The fall was complete; the enmity was fixed; the misery must have been hopeless:—but Divine mercy interposed. The SON, who was "in the bosom of the FATHER," assumed the office of Mediator, and died on the cross to make reconciliation; that as many of our revolted race as should believe in him might receive forgiveness, and be restored to the fellowship of Heaven. Rising from the dead, he ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, and received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them: "and he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building of the body of Christ: till" the redeemed, of every tongue, and kindred, and nation, "all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Here "there is neither Greek nor Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free;" but "there is one body and one Spirit; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all."

Such is the purport of the Gospel: and when this glorious dispensation came to be rightly understood and felt, James, Cephas, and John, the distinguished apostles of the circumcision, perceiving the grace conferred on Paul and Barnabas, affectionately and solemnly gave to them THE RIGHT HANDS OF FELLOWSHIP, THAT THEY SHOULD GO UNTO THE HEATHEN. This memorable example is specially applicable to the present occasion.

By the solemnities of this day, you, Messrs. JUDSON, NOTT, NEWELL, HALL, and RICE, are publicly set apart for the service of God in the Gospel of his Son, among the HEATHEN. With reference, therefore, to this momentous service, we, who are still to labor in the same Gospel here at home, in the presence of God, angels, and men, now give to you, dear Brethren, THE RIGHT HANDS OF FELLOWSHIP. It is not an empty ceremony; it is the act of our hearts, and its import is high and sacred. It expresses our acknowledgement of you as duly authorised ministers of Christ; our approbation of the service to which you are separated; the obligation upon us to render you every assistance in our power; and our readiness to welcome, as fellow citizens with the saints, those who by your ministry may be turned from their vanities to embrace the common salvation.

We trust, dear Brethren, that you are sincerely and devotedly the servants of the most High God, whom we also serve; and we thank Jesus Christ our Lord that unto you is this grace given, that you should preach among the Gentiles his unsearchable riches.

We hesitate not, in this public and solemn manner, to testify our full approbation of the particular service to which you are appointed. We are not of the number of those, who hold the religion of Brahma to be as good for the people of India, as the religion of Jesus; nor can we believe the polluted and bloody rites of a pagan pagoda to be as acceptable to the HOLY ONE of Israel, as the pure and spiritual worship of a christian temple. No, dear Brethren, we have not so learned Christ. We know upon the word of God, that "the things which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God;" that righteousness has no fellowship with unrighteousness, light no communion with darkness, Christ no fellowship with Belial: that "all the world lieth in wickedness," and under just condemnation; and that "there is none other name under heaven, given among men," by which to be saved, than the name of Jesus. We believe, in a word, that the blood of the Son of God was not unnecessarily shed; that the ministry of reconciliation through him was not unnecessarily instituted. We are, therefore, not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, nor do we esteem it of little importance to mankind; but we glory in it, as "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." We also hold the unrevoked edict of the risen Savior to be not only a sufficient warrant, but a solemn, authoritative direction to GO INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE. We, therefore, hail the day—the auspicious day, which we have long desired to see:—THIS DAY, dear Brethren, on which we solemnly present you to God, as a "kind of first fruits" of his American churches. We bow the knee with devout thanksgivings to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, that he has inclined your

hearts and is favoring you with an opportunity to go to "them who are far off," with the words by which they and their children may be saved.

Go then, beloved Brethren, as "the messengers of" these "churches, and the glory of Christ." Go, carry to the poor Heathen, the GOOD NEWS of pardon, peace, and eternal life. Tell them of the God whom we adore; of the Savior in whom we trust; of the glorious immortality for which we hope. Tell them of HIM, WHOSE STAR WAS SEEN IN THE EAST; and point them to that BLOOD, with which he will SPRINKLE MANY NATIONS.

We participate with you in this great undertaking; our hearts are joined with yours, and by the right hand which we give you we shall hold ourselves inviolably pledged, as God shall enable us, for your help. We are not insensible to the sacrifices which you make, or to the dangers and sufferings to which you are devoted. You stand this day "a spectacle to God, to angels, and to men." You are in the act of leaving parents, and friends, and country, "for Christ and the Gospel's sake." A land of darkness, and of the shadow of death is before you; and you are to erect the standard of the cross where Satan has long held his cruel and bloody empire. Your eyes will be pained with sights of revolting impurity and horror; your hearts will be wrung with anguish for immortal souls in the most dreadful bondage: and while you strive for their rescue, you will have to contend, not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with spiritual wickedness in high places. But you go, we trust, in the strength of the Lord; and the weapons of your warfare "are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every

providence of God declare it to be near. The gleams of the dawn are even now to be seen. Let the cheering prospect, dear Brethren, animate your hearts and stimulate your exertions. You are but the precursors of many, who shall follow you in this arduous, glorious enterprise: for the Gospel shall be preached to all nations, and all people shall see the salvation of God.

Beloved Brethren, be of good courage; go in peace; and may the Lord God of the holy apostles and prophets go with you. We commend you to him, and to the word of his grace; and devoutly pray, that in the day of the Lord Jesus, we may have the happiness to see you present many of the Heathen before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy. Amen.

DISCOURSE

THE CERTAIN TRIUMPH OF THE REDEEMER.

For He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.—1 Cor. xv. 25.

Of the probability of a future event, considered simply and by itself, we can know absolutely nothing. Thus, were it demanded whether or not at some point in the regions of infinite space, a system existed similar to our own, I certainly could not answer. To affirm and to deny, would both be alike unphilosophical. Upon the supposition which we have made, there is nothing upon which an opinion can be reasonably founded. If, however, any relations could be traced between the existence of such a system and some clearly established fact, the case would at once be altered. In proportion to the multiplicity and the strength of these relations, would our belief be strengthened, until it arrived at a degree of conviction very

little short of that produced by mathematical demonstration or by the evidence of the senses.

The same principles apply, if we are called upon to answer a question that may be asked respecting the immaterial world. Were it demanded whether the inhabitants of such a system were happy or miserable, I could not answer. To affirm or deny, would be equally premature; for no media of proof on either side have been as yet advanced. Could it, however, be shown under what circumstances the inhabitants in question had been created, and what relations subsisted between their happiness or misery and the laws which God had established for the government of his creatures, then, as in the other case, might an opinion be reasonably entertained.

You observe, then, that in considering the probability of a future event, considered simply and by itself, there is no room for argument; for, from the nature of the case, there is no evidence on which conviction can be founded. Argument is employed in examining the relations which exist between one event that is known and another that is unknown or doubtful. These relations we have the ability to trace with greater or with less accuracy. Here is the true field for human investigation. It is thus that the probability of a future event is brought within the grasp of scientific investigation. Mere assertion here will avail nothing. If one man affirm, he must show why; and if another deny, he must prove not only that the previous showing

is inconclusive, but also that a contrary showing can be maintained. He who shall do otherwise, waives his claim to the character of a philosopher.

The text asserts the certainty of a future event. It becomes a reasonable man to judge of its probability, upon the same principles as he would judge of the probability of any other future event.

It is said that Jesus Christ must reign, until he have put all enemies under his feet. The language is metaphorical, and the metaphor is derived from the language of monarchical governments. A prince reigns wherever his laws are obeyed. By Christ's universal reign, then, it must be meant that his laws will be universally obeyed. These laws are contained in the New Testament, a book which purports to be a revelation from God to man. Hence, Jesus Christ will have triumphed universally, or will have put all enemies under his feet, when the supreme authority of the Bible over the conscience of man shall be universally acknowledged, and when its precepts shall be obeyed by people of every nation and of every language.

Besides this, there are various benefits resulting from this obedience to the Gospel which are alike predicted. These are briefly comprised in the promise, that the miseries of the fall shall be abolished, and this earth become the abode of happiness and peace.

Now, considering the event simply and by itself, no one could decide, either for or against its probability. Our only mode of ascertaining any thing certain in

regard to it, is to consider the relations which it sustains to things which exist, or to the laws which God has established for the government of the universe. Thus, we may inquire whether the moral system contained in the Gospel have any such relations to the sensitive part of our nature as will warrant us to expect its universal reception. We may examine whether the Being, who, by the acknowledgment of all, governs the universe, have given any intimations on this subject. Or we may observe whether the moral forces, which direct the movement of society, have not been so combined, that such an event must be the necessary result. Now all these, and various others that might be adduced, are as fair topics of argument as any other. If, on such grounds as these, we argue the question fairly, it will not be sufficient to answer us by a smile, or an epithet, or a sarcasm. There is argument neither in drollery nor abuse. If a man deny the probability of what we attempt to prove, he must show that the relations which we have attempted to illustrate do not exist, and, also, that other relations do exist which would establish the probability of the contrary event.

So much for the nature of the argument. We now come to the argument itself. We shall endeavour to show, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will universally prevail.

I. From its peculiar adaptedness to gratify the wants of the sensitive part of our nature.

II. From the intimations, in the history of the world, which the Creator of the universe has given, that such is his determination.—And

III. From the fact, that the elements of society have been so combined that, at some time or other, such must be the necessary result.

I. It is probable that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will universally prevail, from its peculiar adaptedness to gratify the wants of the sensitive part of our nature.

By the sensitive part of our nature, I mean those attributes of mind, which are affected either pleasantly or painfully, by facts, and by things about us, that do not address themselves exclusively to the organs of sense. It is, therefore, in this discussion, taken for granted, that we possess taste, which is gratified by our progress in the knowledge of the qualities and relations of things, which delights in the beautiful and glories in the vast; and, also, a conscience which is susceptible of affections peculiar to itself upon the doing of right or the commission of wrong; and that these affections, so far as his history has been traced, have more to do than any other with the happiness or misery of man. Taking these facts for granted, it is not difficult to foretell what sort of intellectual and moral exhibitions will be most widely disseminated, transforming the human character and directing the human will. It is upon the supposition that we may thus judge what will in a particular manner affect the human mind, that

the whole science both of criticism and rhetoric is founded.

I have said that taste is gratified by progress in knowledge of the qualities and relations of things, or by striking exhibitions of what is commonly called relative beauty. Hence the pleasure with which we contemplate a theorem of widely extended application in the sciences, or an invention of important utility in the arts. Now, it is found that the material universe has been so created as admirably to harmonize with this principle of our nature. The laws of matter are few and comparatively simple, but their relations are multiplied even to infinity. The law of gravitation may be easily explained to an ordinary man, or even to an intelligent child. But who can trace one half of its relations to things solid and fluid, things animate and inanimate, the very form of society itself, to this system, other systems, in fine, to the mighty masses of this material universe? The mind delights to carry out such a principle to its ramified illustrations, and hence it cherishes, as its peculiar treasure, a knowledge of these principles themselves. Thus was it, that the discovery of such a law gave the name of Newton to immortality, reduced to harmony the once apparently discordant movements of our planetary system, taught us to predict the events of coming ages, and to explain what was before hidden from the creation of the world.

Now, he who will take the trouble to examine will perceive in the Gospel of Jesus Christ a system of

ultimate truths in morals, in a very striking manner analogous to these elementary laws of physics. In themselves, they are few, simple, and easily to be understood. Their relations, however, as in the other case, are infinite. The moral principle, by which you can easily teach your little child to regulate her conduct in the nursery, will furnish matter for the contemplation of statesmen and sages. It is the only principle on which the decisions of cabinets and courts can be founded, and is, of itself, sufficient to guide the diplomatist through all the mazes of the most intricate negotiation. Let any one who pleases make the experiment for himself. Let him take one of the rules of human conduct which the Gospel prescribes, and, having obtained a clear conception of it, just as it is revealed, let him carry it out in its unshrinking application to the doings and dealings of men. At first, if he be not accustomed to generalizations of this sort, he will find much that will stagger him, and he perhaps will be ready hastily to decide that the ethics of the bible were never intended for practice. But, let him look a little longer, and meditate a little more intensely, and expand his views a little more widely, or become, either by experience or by years, a little older, and he will more and more wonder at the profoundness of wisdom and the universality of application of the principles of the Gospel. With the most expanded views of society, he can go nowhere where the bible has not been before him. With the most penetrating sagacity, he can make no

discovery which the bible had not long ago promulgated. He will find neither application which inspiration did not foresee, nor exception against which it has not guarded. He will, at last, sink down in humble adoration of the wisdom of Jesus of Nazareth, convinced that he is the wisest man as well as the profoundest philosopher who yields himself up, in meekness and simplicity of spirit, to the teachings of the Saviour.

Now, with these universal moral principles the bible is filled. At one time, you find them explicitly stated; at another, merely alluded to; here, standing out in a precept; there, retiring behind a reflection; now, enwrapped in the drapery of a parable, then giving tinge and coloring to a graphically drawn character. Its lessons of wisdom are thus adapted to readers of every age, and to every variety of intellectual culture. Hence no book is adapted to be so universally read as the bible. No other precepts are of so extensive application, or are capable of guiding under so difficult circumstances. None other imbue the mind with a spirit of so deep forethought and so expansive generalization. Hence, there is no book which expands the intellect like the bible. It is the only book which offers a reasonable solution of the moral phenomena which are transpiring around us. Hence, there is the same sort of reason to believe that the precepts of the bible will be read, and studied, and obeyed, as there is to believe that the system of Newton will finally prevail, and eventually

banish from the languages of man the astronomical dreams of Vishnu or of Gandama.

There are, however, other exhibitions of taste, which present no less interesting illustrations of the adaptedness of the bible to the nature of man. It is in the exercise of this faculty, that he delights in the beautiful, glories in the vast, and becomes susceptible of the tenderness of the pathetic. I need not mention that these are among the most pleasing of our intellectual operations, nor that we eagerly search, in every direction, for the objects of their appropriate gratification.

To illustrate the sublimity and beauty of the Holy Scriptures, would, however, demand limits far more extensive than the present discussion will allow. I will, therefore, merely direct your attention to two considerations, which I select, not as the most striking, but as somewhat the most susceptible of brevity of illustration. The first is, the scriptural conceptions of character; the second, the scriptural views of futurity.

It is to be remembered, that the bible contains by far the oldest memorials of our race. Much of it was written by men who had scarcely emerged from the pastoral state, and who had acquired but little of the knowledge, even then possessed, either in the arts or the sciences. There was nothing in the circumstances in which they were placed, to give elevation to character, or beauty, or sublimity, to their conceptions of it. And yet, these conceptions are most strikingly diverse from every thing which we elsewhere behold in all the records

of antiquity. The heroes of the pagan classics are, for the most part, either sycophants or ruffians, as they are swayed, alternately, by cunning or by passion. The objects of their enterprizes are trifling and insignificant. Their narrative is valuable, neither for moral instruction, nor yet for elevated views of human nature, in the individual or in society, but for bursts of eloquent feeling and delineations of nature, everywhere the same, and always speaking the same language into the ear of Genius. The world, in its moral progress, has long since left behind it the ancient conceptions of distinguished character. Who would now take for his model Achilles, or Hector, or Ulysses, or Agamemnon? What mother would now relate their deeds to her children? How different a view is presented by the holy company of Patriarchs; Abraham, that beauteous model of an eastern prince; Moses, that wise legislator; David, the warrior poet; Daniel, the far sighted premier; and Nehemiah, the inflexible patriot. The world still looks up with reverence to these moral examples; they are still as profitable models for contemplation, as they were at the beginning.

But if we would consider this subject in its strongest light, bring together scriptural and classical characters of the same age. Contrast the history of Eneas by Virgil, the most gifted and the most humane of the Roman poets, with that of St. Paul, as found in the Acts and the Epistles. Contrast the faithless, vindictive,

gross, cowardly, and superstitious freebooter, with the upright, meek, benevolent, sympathizing, and yet fearless, and indomitable apostle. Or, if the thought be not profane, compare the most splendid conceptions either of ancient or modern times, with the character of Jesus of Nazareth, as it is delineated in the Gospels. We say, then, that if we would gratify our taste with true conceptions of elevated character, if we would satisfy that innate longing within us after something better and more exalted than our eyes rest upon on earth, it is to the bible that we shall be, by the principles of our nature, irresistibly attracted.

I spoke of the views which the gospel gives of futurity. A brief allusion to a very few topics must suffice for this part of the subject.

The Gospel alone has brought immortality to light. In the place of annihilation, or the transmigration of souls, or the dim place of shadows and of ghosts, or a paradise of sensual gratification, it reveals to us an eternity of moral pleasure or of moral pain, the eternal weight of glory or the wrath of God without mixture. Every thing else makes this world substance, and the other world shadow. The bible alone makes this world shadow, and the other world substance. While it makes this world merely the vestibule of our being, it alone renders it truly valuable, by making every moment and every purpose take strong hold of eternity.

The bible presents us with the only views of the character of Deity, in unison with the intellectual and moral aspirations of man. It tells us of a Being who, the essential cause of all things, sustains the flight of a sparrow, and upholds, by his word, this measureless universe; who, unsearchable in wisdom, allows every creature whom he has made to fulfil the purposes of its individual will, while, at the same time, his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure; who, infinite in compassion, is every where most intimately present to every one of us, sustaining the disconsolate, comforting the cast down, binding up the broken in heart, and pouring himself abroad, in blessing, upon the infinite creation which he everywhere pervades; a God, so pure that the heavens are not clean in his sight, and so just, that He will forever and everywhere mete out to every creature, how high or how low soever, exactly according to the merit of its deeds.

But specially worthy to be mentioned here, is the transcendent conception of the plan of redemption. The race of man fixed in opposition to the unchangeable attributes of the all glorious God; the Son of God, undertaking the work of reconciliation; the mission of Christ, his bitter death, his triumphant resurrection and ascension to his primitive glory; entire cleansing from the stain of guilt to all that will believe; heaven, with its eternal weight of glory, freely offered to the penitent; the resurrection of the dead; the final judgment;

all things material fleeing away from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne; the irrevocable decision; the shouts of the redeemed; the wailings of the lost; these are some of the spiritual ideas which the Gospel has poured upon the darksome mind of sin-beclouded man. Now, setting aside altogether the fact, that, thus far, wherever these notions of religion have been taught, all others have soon ceased to be either known or thought of, I ask whether a system which sheds such light upon all the relations of man, which so fills his conceptions with all that is beautiful and sublime in morals, which proffers to him an immortality more glorious than aught that elsewhere the mind of man had conceived, must not, from the principles of human nature, be in the end universally received.

We proceed to consider another fact to which we, in the commencement, alluded. It is that, from some cause or other, there has prevailed throughout our race a very universal feeling of guiltiness, and an apprehension, more or less distressing, of the wrath of Deity, on account of sin.

Of the prevalence of this sentiment, you have manifest proof, in the terror with which unusual phenomena always inspire mankind, in the prevalence of sacrifices and other means of appeasing the wrath of the gods, in the forms of religion, almost as numerous as the tribes of men on the earth, and in the fact that in every nation particular individuals have been set apart, whose special business it has been to propitiate the Supreme

Being. Nor is this consciousness of guilt the mere phantom of a savage's imagination. I doubt whether there be a human being in this assembly, this evening, who hath not, more than once, so felt it as to exclaim, in all the bitterness of a wounded spirit, what must I do to be saved?

Of the distress which this apprehension has occasioned, you may judge from the nature of the means which have been adopted to alleviate it. Hence, arose those costly temples on which the wealth of nations was exhausted. Hence, smoked the hecatombs of classic story, and the countless victims of the Jewish service. Hence, the mother has devoted her first born to atone for her transgression, and the father has perished beneath the wheel of an idol's car. And hence, that every where, but in Protestant Christendom, the priesthood have exercised so entire a sway over the opinions and actions of men. Claiming the exclusive prerogative of propitiating the Deity, they wielded at will the stormy passions of the multitude. Such has been the fact under every form of false religion. It shows us, at least, how agonizing is this apprehension, and that men will sacrifice any thing, if it can only be allayed.

But neither the offerings of the laity, nor the services of the priesthood, could ever take away sin. The thoughtful heathen, as he retired from the classic temple and bleeding victim, out of a conscience still pressed down under the weight of its own condemnations, ex-

claimed, O that I knew where I might find Him! The Hebrew, turning from the smoking altar and the atoning priest, still cried out, Wherewith shall I appear before God and bow myself before the High God! The Hindu mother, returning childless from the river that has swallowed up her babe, feels the sting of guilt still rankling in unmitigated agony! The body of the devotee is crushed beneath the wheel, but ah! the wound was far deeper. From that mangled, bleeding corse, his soul is now set free, but yet uncleansed and in all her guiltiness, she appears before her God. Thus is it in our own country and at the present day. A man, feeling the agony of a guilty conscience, may flee every where but to Calvary, and there is no relief for his anguish. But let him hear that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish but have everlasting life; let him cast himself for salvation upon him whose blood cleanseth from all sin; let him imbibe and practice the precepts of the Gospel, and he feels in his spirit that his deadly wound is healed. The peace that passeth understanding is shed abroad in his soul. The Spirit witnesseth with his spirit that he is reconciled to God. From the dominion of sin, from the tyranny of the passions, from subjection to a sensual and transitory world, from the intolerable anguish of a wounded spirit, the Son has made him free, and he is free indeed. Being justified by faith, he has

peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoices with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

I am not speaking fables. I am speaking facts—facts as well attested as any other in the history of man. Such are the wants of our nature and such are the effects of the Gospel, wherever it is received in simplicity and in truth. And now, before we go any farther, let us reflect upon the ground we have gone over; let us remark how the bible is adapted to gratify the taste, to ennoble the imagination, to expand the conception of man; let us estimate the power of the religious principle in man, and the utter vanity and heartlessness of every thing else on which that principle can fasten, and I ask every man to say, for himself, whether, judging from its adaptedness to gratify the wants of our nature, it be not certain that it must in the end prevail.

So much for the first argument.

II. There is sound reason for believing that the Creator has given us assurance that the religion of the bible shall universally prevail.

I need scarcely repeat what was said at the commencement of this discourse, that, without an examination of the evidence in the case, to decide whether such an event would take place, or whether God would reveal it, would be absurdly unphilosophical. Yet some sort of notion of the probability of an event may be deduced from a camparison of the act with the known character of the actor. Thus, it is not improbable that

the Supreme Being should have a design with regard to this world, nor, as it is granted on all sides that he is infinitely merciful, is it improbable that he should design to remove the miseries which afflict us. Now, as the very thing said to be predicted, is that these miseries are to be removed, there is surely neither intrinsic probability in the thing itself, nor in the supposition that God should predict it.

But we assert that God has given positive assurance that the Gospel shall prevail. To present the argument at length would be unsuitable for this occasion. We shall merely attempt a very brief illustration of the principle on which the argument for the divine inspiration of the Scriptures rests.

You are aware, then, that the various events that come within our knowledge, take place in the manner of a regular and established series. Every one in this endless succession has its own antecedent and its own consequent. Hence are we enabled to use our reason, both in preparing for the future and in accounting for the past.

Whenever, in any case, this stated connection is discovered, so that one event is the invariable antecedent of the other, we call the first a cause, the second an effect. Thus, the falling of a shower is one event—the growth of vegetation is another. The connection between them has, in certain circumstances, been found invariable, and hence we say in summer that the rain has caused the grass to spring forth, and also that the

springing forth of the grass is the effect of the shower. The same is true of intellectual changes. Thus, reflection is one state of mind—knowledge is another. The connection between them has been found invariable, and hence we say that reflection is the cause of knowledge, and that knowledge is the effect of reflection.

When, however, we use these terms, we do not mean that the one event is the efficient cause of the other—that is, that it is the cause in such a sense that the one could produce the other, if there were nothing else existing in the universe. We merely mean that, in the present system, the one is made the stated antecedent of the other, but we know not that it has any more efficient agency in its production than any other thing. God is the sole and only efficient cause. If he had seen fit, he could as well have arranged entirely different antecedents and consequents, or he could have operated every change by itself, without having established any regular order of succession. But he has not seen fit thus to operate. He has connected every thing in the manner that we have shown. This we call the course of nature. It is God working according to the laws which he has been pleased to establish. And as He has established this manner of succession, He only can vary it. If, therefore, it be clearly and palpably varied *from*, it is equally clear and palpable that he himself must have varied it.

You will observe also, that these laws of antecedence and consequence, or of cause and effect, pervade equal-

ly the whole system, material and immaterial, of which we form a part. Thus, belief is a state of mind which never arises of itself, any more than the herb grows where there is no moisture. It has its regular and stated antecedents. Otherwise, there could be no reliance upon testimony, and all history and all reasoning about facts would be the veriest nonsense. I cannot *believe* that I see an audience before me, unless the antecedent be that I *see* an audience. I cannot *see* an audience, unless the antecedent be that an audience is present. Casualty in these intellectual changes would produce effects far more deleterious to the interests of society, than any that could arise from the same cause in the material world. It would at once do away, universally, belief and every thing that is predicated upon it.

Let us now apply these principles to the case before us. It is, I suppose, granted that a variation, clear and indisputable, from the established succession of cause and effect, or of antecedent and consequent, is a sufficient proof of the interposition of Deity; for none but He could have thus varied the mode of his own operation. Nor can it be denied that, if such a variation from the acknowledged laws of cause and effect be indissolubly connected with instructions purporting to come from God, God does in fact render himself responsible for the truths of all that is thus delivered.

Now, we say that the first promulgation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was attended with such a variation

from the laws of cause and effect, that the interposition of Deity must necessarily be supposed, in order to account for it, and, therefore, for the truth of whatever that Gospel reveals, the moral character of the Deity is responsible.

The apostles and disciples and the men of that day did most certainly believe, that they saw the eyes of the blind opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lepers cleansed, and the dead raised, by the word of Jesus of Nazareth; and also, that, after having seen him crucified, dead, and buried, they saw him alive again, conversed with him, walked with him; and that they afterwards saw him, under most remarkable circumstances, ascend up into heaven.

Now, I say, the question here really is not whether there *was* any variation from the regular succession of cause and effect, but where was that variation. Either these events took place at the word of Jesus Christ, or they did not. If they *did* take place, as the evangelists relate them, the variation consists in this, that God in this case suspended the laws of cause and effect, and made a single word to become the antecedent of changes totally unlike to any which, either before or since, have ever been known. And if this be so, then He has intended to render himself responsible for all that has been taught in connection with such an interposition. If, on the contrary, these events did not take place, at the word of Jesus Christ, then every individual of a great number of men either believed they

saw what they did not see, or they saw what did not exist. There must have been, therefore, a variation from the laws of cause and effect, in the case of every several individual who supposed himself a spectator; that is, instead of a variation in one case, a variation in a thousand cases. Now such a departure from the laws of cause and effect could have been produced only by the Supreme Being, and it was inseparably connected with the promulgation of the Gospel. Just as much then, as in the other case, does it render the Supreme Being responsible for all that we find there either as precept or prophecy. On either supposition, the proof is full and decisive.

Such, then, is one view of the principles on which rests our belief that the agency of Deity was concerned in the promulgation of this system, and, therefore, that his veracity is responsible for the truth of it. The applications of the principle are various. In the Old Testament, the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish church, the separation of the Jews from all other nations, the facts connected with the prophecies which the sacred books contain, are inexplicable, upon any other supposition. Beside these, the fact that a few fishermen of Galilee should have discovered a new moral system, thousands of years in advance of their age, a system which does beyond question embody the moral laws by which the universe is governed, can be in no other manner explained. Grant that God spake, and all is revealed. Deny it, and all is mystery. Grant

that God spake, and there is one miracle; deny it, and there are ten thousand.

Now, in the examination of evidence, there is no religion whatever. It is a mere matter of science, and to be decided by the laws of science. In answer to what we have said, therefore, it will not do to laugh at religion, nor rail at enthusiasm. If a man disbelieve what we have here attempted to prove, let him show a reason for it. Let him either show a fallacy in our reasonings, or else allow our conclusion. If he will do neither, let him confess that he does not believe, though he cannot tell why he does not, and thus he waives the jurisdiction of reason, and puts himself on a level with the enthusiasts whom he so much derides.

So much, then, for the evidence that the author of the material system around us, the supreme and ever blessed God, is the author of the system of religion contained in the Holy Scriptures. There is just the same evidence to believe that it will universally prevail. Its prevalence is foretold in every variety of form; it is interwoven with the principles of the system itself.

The first promise after man's apostacy, "it shall bruise thy head," foretold enigmatically all the glory that we look for. In later ages it was revealed without a figure. As I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, was the promise of Jehovah to Moses. Prophet after prophet, rapt in holy vision, foresaw the coming triumphs of the Redeemer and rejoiced in the approaching subjection to his universal reign.

"Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thy inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks, nation shall no more lift up sword against nation, nor shall they learn war any more." The same thing is taught by our Saviour in precept and in parable, and is abundantly to be inferred from the prayer which he hath taught us. In all the writings of the apostles, it is so frequently alluded to, that to mention all the passages in which it is either asserted or understood would occupy all the time which remains for the remainder of this discourse.

But why need I mention particular passages. The very system itself presupposes its universal extension. If God have interfered at all in the promulgation of the Gospel, it is all true. A taint of guiltiness hath overspread our whole race. This world is in rebellion against the everliving God. Jesus Christ has appeared in our nature, by a manifestation of infinite love, to win back our affection, and, by the offering up of Himself, to render consistent with holiness our reconciliation to God. He came to reclaim a lost world from its wanderings; to subdue to obedience this revolted province of Jehovah's empire; and to give indubitable assurance that all this would yet be triumphantly accomplished. He, whom, on the holy mount, the Father, from the excellent glory, declared to be his well beloved Son,

expired on the cross. And truly, as there is a God in heaven, this people shall yet be redeemed. This earth, which has been moistened with a Saviour's blood, shall yet be his universal possession; for it bears upon its solid surface the seal to the irrevocable covenant. The misery of sin, which Jesus Christ came to do away, shall cease; and from every nation and people under the whole heaven shall ascend the universal shout, Salvation to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever!

III. Thirdly. The elements of society have been so combined as manifestly to tend to such a result as revelation has predicted.

The nature of the proof in this case is as follows. It is taken for granted, that men are endowed with various desires essential to their existence in its present state. Many of these desires can only be gratified in a state of society, and when other men, as well as the individual, obey the laws which the Creator has established. Now, it can be shown, conclusively, that these laws are essentially the same as those revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Hence, when every man finds it for his own interest that himself and all other men should universally obey the precepts of the Gospel, it is evident that the love of happiness essential to our sensitive nature, must in the end ensure its universal reception.

I will endeavour to illustrate the principle on which this argument rests, by an allusion to the laws which regulate the accumulation of national wealth.

The various substances of which this earth is composed are all designed for the benefit of man. Every one possesses some quality by which it is capable of gratifying some human desire. But that quality must first be discovered, and the substance in which it resides must be modified by the hand of industry, before it can answer the purpose for which it was designed. As soon as it has been thus modified, it becomes an article of wealth. And nations and individuals are denominated rich, just in proportion to the number and magnitude of the articles which they possess, adapted to gratify the desires of man.

We say that, in order to the production of wealth, the substances of nature must be modified by the hand of industry. Here you will remark two things. 1. The qualities of the substance must be discovered. 2. The means must be discovered for giving it the desired modification. He has in himself no power to modify matter, except to the very small amount of his muscular strength. By his intellectual ability, however, he can discover and put in operation agents that will produce the effects which he desires. To illustrate what I mean, in the manufacture of sugar. The sweetness, which resides in the cane, must first be discovered, or the vegetable, though of itself intrinsically valuable, would be useless. This is a work of mind. Again, man has no organs by which he can transform the juice into sugar, and unless it be transformed, his former discovery is useless. He is endowed with facul-

ties, by which he can discover certain qualities of fire and iron, which will enable industry to produce the required result. This again we see is a work of mind. The principle here illustrated is universal. It applies to the production of wealth, or objects for the gratification of desire every where. And hence results the universal law that, just in proportion as the human mind is most successfully stimulated to discovery and invention and the body inured to vigorous labor, will the wealth of a nation increase, and it is not possible that it should be increased in any other manner.

Now, it has been found, by the experience of ages, that the strongest stimulant which can possibly be applied to the productive energies both of body and of mind, is to allow every man to employ his whole power, physical and intellectual, in such manner as he chooses, if he do not so employ it as to interfere with the corresponding enjoyment of his neighbour. In other words, it has been found that nations grow rich and happy, just in proportion as every man, magistrate, and citizen, estimates every other man's happiness as dearly as his own; that is to say, when every man obeys the universal law of human action contained in the Scripture, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This is the reason why justice clothes a nation in plenty, while injustice curses it with want. This is the reason why so many nations on the earth, with meagre and stinted physical advantages, abound in the comforts and even the luxuries of life, while regions of

exhaustless fertility, under a Mahometan or Papal despotism, live from century to century on the brink of starvation. Thus is it that the Christian religion has frequently, in a few years, done more to promote the progress of civilization, than all other means united have ever done, in many generations.

But this is not all. That a nation may grow rich, not only is it necessary that industry be exerted; beside this, the instruments, with which it may work and the material on which it is to be employed, in other words, capital, must be accumulated. If whatever is produced be immediately consumed on the gratification of the passions, not only are the means of future accumulation annihilated, but the power of the agent for labor is lessened, and hence must result an accelerated tendency to poverty. Capital can be accumulated only by self-denial, by the government of the passions, by investing all that portion of the results of industry, which is not needed for our temperate enjoyment, in some such manner as shall benefit the condition of our fellow-men. Now, this is just the discipline for which the Gospel prepares mankind. Its first lesson is self-denial. Except a man deny himself, he cannot be my disciple. At the very outset, then, it prescribes entire subjugation of the passions, the very basis of all frugality. Another of its lessons is the necessity of individual and universal industry. "This we commanded you, that if any man would not work neither shall he eat." Thus, while inculcating, as religious duties, in-

dustry and frugality, the Gospel teaches the soundest and most valuable lessons in the science of political economy. That nations, as well as individuals, can grow rich on no other principles, is as evident as demonstration. And, on the other hand, that a nation, practicing the industry and frugality of the Gospel, must become wealthy, that is, must abound in all that is requisite to satisfy virtuous desire, is equally incontestible. Thus we see how closely is connected the prevalence of religion with the prosperity of an individual nation.

Besides, where every individual is accumulating, the whole must accumulate, and, hence, such a nation must have an annual amount of wealth to offer in the markets of the world. But where shall she offer it. An indolent and profligate people, with imperfect skill and scanty capital, will have nothing to offer in return. It is not that they do not want the results of your labor and frugality, but that they have nothing wherewith to purchase them. A degraded and vicious people can never be valuable customers; for they must always be very limited consumers. To be aware of the force of these considerations, compare our exports to a heathen, with those to a Christian nation; or those to a Protestant, with those to a Catholic nation; or those to the island of Great Britain, with those to the rich and thickly peopled shores of the Mediterranean.

Thus you see that not only is it for the interest of every man that his fellow-citizens should obey the precepts of the Gospel, it is also for the interest of every

nation that every other nation should embrace it. So thoroughly is universal philanthropy interwoven with the social system of this world. Thus necessary has God made the happiness of my fellow-men to my own well being. An indolent, ignorant, and badly governed nation is a pecuniary injury, as well as a disgrace, to every other nation on earth, and the soundest principles of political wisdom would teach us all to make an effort to reclaim it. Our own interest, and the interest of man every where, are, by the ordinance of the Creator, the same. Benevolence is always the greatest sagacity. Hence, if we would render a nation a profitable customer, the surest means for accomplishing our object is to furnish it with the bible, the only certain means of intellectual and moral improvement.

To illustrate the truth of these remarks, allow me to refer you for a moment to the history of the African slave trade. The whole slave coast and a wide extent of interior is fertile in all the productions of a tropical climate. Few portions of the earth would yield more abundantly, if submitted to the hand of industry, rendered skillful by education. And yet, what does that vast region export? a few cargoes of gums and ivory, and some thousands of human bodies. It is almost a wilderness, and is becoming every year more desolate. What does it consume? a few cargoes of trinkets and coarse cutlery, scarcely as much as one respectable manufacturing village would easily furnish. I ask you, now, what would have been the result if, instead of

murder and pillage, we had sent them the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the civilization which always follows in its train. Why, that whole region would have been now as thickly peopled as these United States. That coast would have been studded with cities, those rivers would have been lined with villages; the whole territory would have been, at this moment, blooming like the garden of Eden, loaded with the abundance of harvest, and filled with the abodes of civilized man. There is not a workshop, in Europe or America, whose fabrics she would not have purchased, nor a man in Christendom who would not have been, at this very day, the happier for her productions. You see, then, from this individual case, how intimately connected are our interest and our duty. You see how our own happiness is interwoven with that of every brother of the family of man. You see that the best desires of the human heart must, in the end, lead us to choose for ourselves, and to offer to others, the moral laws of the New Testament; for, in no other manner, can those desires be so fully gratified.

Another illustration may be taken from a reference to the awful miseries which war has, from the earliest ages, inflicted upon the human race. This calamity is, as you know, the immediate result of the gratification of human passion and human avarice. It can never cease, until men are universally restrained by moral principle. Estimate, if you can, the amount of national distress which it has brought upon Europe, for

the last hundred years. And, here, you must remember that all the sums taken to support armies and navies, and all the property wasted, and all the interest upon the debt thus accumulated, is so much capital taken from the shop of the mechanic, or the warehouse of the merchant, or the granary of the husbandman, which would otherwise have gone on increasing forever at the rate of compound interest. The wealth consumed in wars on the continent, for the last hundred years, if it had been suffered thus to accumulate in peace, would have made every acre of Europe a garden, and every individual comparatively rich. And, had the principles of the Gospel universally prevailed, it would have thus accumulated. Look at the lesson which Great Britain teaches. Every political change wrings from her starving population a universal groan of distress, at this time almost intolerable. But, now, take the principle and interest of her national debt, for both of them are taken from the capital of the people, and estimate what would be its amount at compound interest. It has been spent in war and bloodshed. Had it been accumulated by the arts of peace, to the present moment, it would be abundantly sufficient to confer education and refinement, and literal abundance, upon the poorest subject of the realm.

Now all this, in the progress of society, will become evident to every man. It will be universally and clearly seen, that men can neither attain the happiness of which the present state is susceptible, nor even escape

the miseries which now press so heavily upon them, but by obeying the precepts of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Hence, we say that the elements of society are so combined as to tend to such a result as revelation has predicted.

Let us now recapitulate the argument which we have pursued.

1. We have endeavored to show, that there is the same reason to believe that the bible will be universally read, as there is to believe that any other book will be read, which elevates the conceptions and gratifies the taste. There is the same reason to believe that it will be obeyed, as there is to believe that any other precepts will be obeyed, that afford permanent relief to a universal and most distressing anguish.

2. There is reason to believe, that the attributes of the Supreme Creator are responsible for its success. He has seen fit to connect, indissolubly, the proof of it with the principles on which all evidence of every sort rests. Either he is not the author of the ordinary events which take place around us, or he is also the author of the extraordinary events which were unquestionably connected with the promulgation of the Gospel. He is as much responsible, in one case as in the other, for the belief which right reason teaches us.

3. The desire for improvement, in his condition, which animates every man, can be gratified only by obeying the social laws which his Creator has established. These laws are the precepts of the New

Testament. As the progress of knowledge reveals more and more clearly the indissoluble connection between the moral and physical laws of nature, our very desire of happiness will teach men, as nations and individuals, the wisdom of taking, as the rules of our conduct, the precepts of the Saviour. Now, what men clearly perceive to be their interest, it is reasonable to suppose that they will do.

Again. The connection which this subject holds with the evidences of the truth of the bible are various and important. Each of the topics which we have discussed furnishes a separate and distinct medium of proof.

1. It is not beyond the power of human reason to affirm, in general, what the human mind can and what it cannot accomplish. There is no instance on record, that I remember, in which any human being has been many centuries in advance of his age. On the contrary, it has been evident that, by the general progress of society, the most remarkable discoveries must soon have been made by others, if they had not been made by the individuals whom they now distinguish. Nay, so remarkably is this the fact, that many of the most extraordinary discoveries have been made by several persons, in different countries, at the same time. But here is a case in which a few men, in general illiterate, and by nothing else but moral character distinguished from the lower class of the nation, to which they belonged, have promulgated a system of moral truth not

only in advance of their age, but the profoundest wisdom of the present day cannot tell how much it is in advance of our own. The most accurate survey of human relations has not yet demonstrated the truth of a single moral law which is not found within those pages. The infinitely diversified relations of society have not yet given rise to a single moral question which is not there solved. Age after age attempts in vain to discover a radical cure for some form of social misery, and, when the cure is at last discovered, it is found to be the very same as Jesus Christ and his apostles, nearly two thousand years ago, taught. Now, I say that there is nothing parallel to this in the whole history of the human mind. It as far transcends any thing that has been elsewhere seen, of the ordinary, or extraordinary exhibitions of intellectual power, as carrying away the gates of Gaza, or overthrowing the pillars of a mighty temple, transcends the ordinary exhibitions of muscular strength. Thus, exclusively of all proof from miracles, I see not how the acknowledged facts can be accounted for, without the admission of divine interposition. And, if God have interposed at all in the case, the whole system is true.

2. We are all aware that all our knowledge, of external objects as well as of past events, comes through the medium of evidence. By the evidence of my senses, I know that there is a tree before me. By the evidence of testimony, I know that Rome was built. Overturn the principles of evidence, and there is, at once, an end

to all science and to all history. No man could know any thing farther than that he existed, and that he thought. Now, it has pleased God so to interweave the proof of his miraculous interposition, in the promulgation of religion, with the very principles of evidence, that he who denies it must deny either the evidence of sense or that of testimony. Hence, his argument must undermine the whole fabric of our knowledge of the past and of the absent. And thus it is radically and unquestionably subversive of itself. It proceeds upon the supposition that the events in question cannot be true, because they are contrary to the course of nature. But this very course of nature can only be established upon the principles of evidence which the objection has already denied, and hence the very fabric of the objection, by its own showing, crumbles into dust. Thus would infidelity, by an argument embosoming within itself its own manifest refutation, annihilate knowledge, dissipate science, and render it impossible, on the very principles of our nature, that either should ever have the shadow of an existence.

3. It cannot be denied that man is a material agent, and subject to the laws of matter, nor that the author of these laws is the Supreme Governor of the universe. It is equally undeniable, that man is a moral agent, subject also to moral laws, and that the author of these laws is the same supreme divinity. If a moral law of this world be discovered, it is as certain that God or-

dained it, at that he ordained the laws of galvanism or of electricity. And, hence, the book which contains these laws is clearly God's word, and fully and universally binding upon the conscience. Now, that the New Testament does contain the moral laws which were ordained for this system, is already clearly demonstrable. For nothing is the progress of science more remarkable, than for the flood of light which it is pouring upon this subject. Every moral and every social experiment, that has ever been made, bears witness to the same truth. And, hence, from its very adaptation to the social nature of man, the New Testament is evidently the law of God, and obligatory upon the conscience. Here then, by another and distinct medium of proof, do we arrive at the conclusion that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the sure word of prophecy.

Christian brethren, you see how abundant is the evidence on which the word of our salvation rests. God has interwoven it with the very principles of science, that all knowledge must be overthrown, ere the foundation of our hope can be undermined. Nay, he has so constructed the world, that every thing we see and every thing we read of, bears testimony to the truth of revelation. Let us, then, in all the confidence of men who know that they have not followed cunningly devised fables, urge upon our fellow-men the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Affectionately and zealously, yet meekly, let us instruct those that oppose themselves, that peradventure God may give them

repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. And, above all, let us show, by lives of consistent piety, and charity, that the religion which we profess has its proper effect upon our own souls. This is an argument which moves the moral as well as intellectual nature of man, and it has thus far been always irresistible.

Upon those who disbelieve the evidence of revelation, we would urge a single consideration. Friends and fellow-citizens: we have endeavored to set before you, in meekness, and with reason, some of the arguments which convince us, that our religion is from God, and that it will ultimately prevail. What we urge certainly has the appearance of truth. It is most unreasonable for you to turn from it without examination. With the sincerest desires for your present and your future welfare, we respectfully request you patiently, candidly, and thoroughly, to examine the subject. Having done this, we cease. The responsibility of your eternal destiny is in your own hands, and with devout prayers that God may lead you to a knowledge of himself, there do we leave it. Amen.

NOTE.—To the argument in the preceding sermon, it has been objected, that the author has not considered the obstacle to the triumph of the Gospel, arising from the depravity of the human heart, or its entire opposition to holiness. To this objection, the answer is briefly as follows. The argument is addressed either to believers, or unbelievers. To the Christian, the declaration of God in the scriptures, that the whole world shall be converted, is a full and sufficient warrant for entire belief. Those on the contrary who do not believe the bible, cannot urge, as an objection, the depravity of man, for this is a doctrine of *revelation*, whose authority they utterly disclaim. Or, if they urge it as an objection drawn from books which we believe, we are by all the rules of reasoning allowed to meet them with a statement of the revealed doctrine of the sovereign and efficacious influences of the Holy Spirit, which is abundantly sufficient to overcome all the obstacles arising from the opposition of a sinner's heart. As, therefore, the very mention of the objection, brings with it its own antidote, it was not in the body of the discourse brought into the account.

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ENCOURAGEMENTS TO RELIGIOUS EFFORT.

Matthew iv. 10.—*Thy kingdom come.*

The cause of Sabbath Schools, at the present day, and before such an audience as this, needs no advocate. If there be a God, a heaven, and a hell; if man be immortal and capable of religion, and if his present existence be probationary; if he be a sinner, and if there be but one way of salvation; and if moral cultivation may be most successfully bestowed in childhood and youth; then, surely, the importance of inculcating upon the young the principles of the Gospel, may be taken for granted. Supposing, then, these truths to be admitted, we shall on this occasion invite your attention to an illustration of some of the encouragements, which the present state of society offers, to an effort for the universal diffusion of Christianity.

It is the general misfortune of man, to be wise a century too late. We look back with astonishment upon those means for guiding the destinies of our race, which preceding generations have enjoyed; and we see how, in the possession of our present knowledge, we might then have lived gloriously. We forget that no man lives to purpose, who does not live for posterity. Should I then be so happy as to direct your views only for a few years forward; should the Spirit of all wisdom teach each one of us the responsibility which rests upon the men of the passing generation; we shall, through eternity, bless God, that he has permitted us to assemble, at this time, to deliberate upon the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

It will be convenient to my purpose, to commence this discussion by a brief allusion to the nature of the Reformation by Luther. You have all been accustomed to consider this as by far the most interesting portion of the history of man, since the time of the Apostles. In many respects it is so. Its results, although daily multiplying, are already incalculable. The fabric of ancient society began then to crumble, and a more beauteous edifice to arise from amid its ruins. Beside this, there is much of the moral picturesque with which every view is crowded. An imaginative man kindles into enthusiasm at the recital of every transaction. The leaders, on both sides, were men of

consummate ability and of revolutionary energy. The fiercest passions of the human heart, in an age almost ignorant of law, stimulated them to contention unto death. Hence the whole period presents an almost unbroken succession of battles and sieges; of foreign war and intestine commotion; of brutal persecution, and of dignified endurance: and all this is rendered yet more impressive by the frequent vision of racks and dungeons, of torture and exile; of the assassin's dagger, and the martyr's stake. It need not then seem surprising, if this strong appeal to the imagination somewhat bewilder the reason, and if the impressive circumstances attendant upon the change, too much divert our attention from the nature of the change itself. These violent commotions, like friction in machinery, rather disclose the nature of the materials and the amount of the resistance, than the direction of the force, or the celerity of the movement.

But let us now, for a moment, draw aside these attending circumstances, and in what light does the Reformation present itself to our view? Simply as a period in which the creation of new forces changed the relation which had previously existed between the elements of society. A new and most powerful order of men arose suddenly into being; and institutions, cemented by the lapse of ages, required no inconsiderable modification to meet the unexpected exigency. In the midst of all this, a new and moral impulse was communicated to society, by which these changes were rendered beneficial to man, and the blessings which they conferred were perpetuated to the present generation.

To illustrate this very briefly—You may be aware that at about the period of the Reformation, great changes were wrought in the physical condition of man. The discovery of America, and of a passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, and of the use of the mariner's compass, opened exhaustless fountains of wealth to commerce and manufactures. Labor became, of course, vastly more valuable, and artisans became possessed of the means of independence. Hence a new order of men, a middling class, was created. Power, and wealth, and education were placed within the reach of a vastly greater number. The moral centre of gravity settled towards the base of the social cone. The rod of feudal vassalage was broken, and men were first acknowledged to possess rights which they did not derive from hereditary succession.

Beside this, the invention of the printing press furnished, at the same time, new means of intellectual culture. This astonishing instrument increases indefinitely the power of thought. It transfers the sceptre of empire from matter to mind. It enables genius to multiply, to any extent, the copies of its own conceptions. Hence the facilities for intellectual cultivation were abundantly bestowed upon this new order of men, to which commerce and manufactures had given birth.

But above all, it pleased God to raise up, in the persons of the reformers, men of a character equal to the crisis. They were men who counted not their lives dear unto them when a moral change was to be effected. In despite of every thing appalling in the form of opposition, they studied, they argued, they preached, they wrote, they translated, they printed, they employed for

the promotion of true religion all those means which the progress of society had placed within their power. They thus gave the impress of Christianity to the changes which were going forward; and that their labors formed by far the most important link in the chain of events which is denominated the Reformation, may be evident from the fact, that nowhere, but in Protestant countries, have the blessings resulting from the social changes, to which we have alluded, been fully realized. Catholic countries have been comparatively uninproved, except where their condition has been changed by the influence of Protestantism in their vicinity.

These few remarks are, we presume, sufficient to show the importance of moral effort at the crisis of a social revolution. But, if we mistake not, physical and intellectual changes very similar to those which characterized the Reformation, are at this moment going forward in the midst of us.

First; Important changes have of late taken place in the physical condition of man.

The natural wealth of man consists in his power to labor. This every man in a greater or less degree possesses. The less numerous class, in addition to the power to labor, possess also a portion of capital. Hence, as labor becomes more valuable, every man may become richer; that is, he is able to command a larger amount of such things as may gratify his desires. Almost every man among us may now, if he will, command the means of a very comfortable living. An industrious and virtuous artisan may provide for his family advantages, which, a few years since, were considered the attributes only of those above the level of mediocrity. The cause of this change may be easily stated. Labor is valuable to the employer in proportion to the amount of results that it will accomplish. Now, it is well known, that, within the last fifty years, increased skill has rendered human labor vastly more productive than it ever was before. A greater amount of the product of his labor may, therefore, be reserved to the operative, while the capitalist receives at the same time a larger interest upon his investment.

It is interesting, also, to observe the manner in which this increased value has been given to human labor. In some cases, division of labor has enabled one man to do as much as could otherwise be done by two hundred. In other and more numerous cases, a still more gratifying result has been produced, by the increased skill with which science has taught us to employ those qualities and relations with which the all-merciful God has seen fit to endow the universe around us. The most important of these are, the gravitating power of water, and the expansive force of steam. It is by a most beautiful adaptation of the former, that you, in this city, employ a little waterfall, without cessation, and almost without cost, to carry the means of cleanliness and health to every family within your borders. In various other parts of our country, you may behold a single individual, by means of machinery connected with a similar waterfall, executing, with the utmost perfection, what could not otherwise, in the same time, be performed by many hundreds.

But specially am I astonished in contemplating the results of steam; that new power which the last half century has placed within the control of man. Whether we consider the massiveness of its strength, or the facility of its

adaptation, we are equally overwhelmed at the results which it promises to confer upon society. Probably half a million of men could not propel a boat two hundred miles with the speed given to it by a dozen workmen with a powerful engine. On the Liverpool and Manchester railroad, two men, with a locomotive engine, could easily do the work of a thousand, with a speed five or six times as great as human strength could, at its greatest effort, accomplish. Beside this, there can be but very little doubt, that steam will, at least in Great Britain, to a very great extent, supersede the employment of brutes for draft labor, and thus enable the same extent of land to sustain more than double its present number of human beings. The same kind of result is in all cases produced, either by the introduction of valuable machinery, or by improvement in the means of internal or external communication. The instances which I have selected, are merely intended as specimens of a class of agents which Providence has, within a few years, taught us to employ for the improvement of our condition. It ought also to be distinctly borne in mind, that probably only a very small number of the most important of these, has yet been discovered; and that, of those which have been discovered, the application is but yet in its infancy. Sufficient, I trust, has been said, to illustrate the obvious tendency of improvements in the arts, and to show how utterly incalculable are the benefits which they have evidently in reserve for us. The manner in which all these changes affect the laboring classes may be thus briefly stated. The comforts of living are procurable only by human labor. If, then, by means of improvement in the arts, the labor of the human race is able to produce this year, twice as large an amount of the comforts of living as was produced last year, then every man may have twice as much to enjoy: and may, therefore, be this year in circumstances as comfortable as those of a man of twice his wealth the year before. With the labor of last year he may earn twice the amount of comfort, or he may possess the former amount of comfort with half the amount of labor. A little reflection will, I think, teach any one, that these are precisely the results to which the movements of society are tending. It will, I think, also be evident, that the forces are similar to those exerted upon the condition of man at the time of the Reformation, except that they affect more permanently, and to a greater degree, a much larger portion of the community.

The immediate effect of these changes upon the condition of the larger classes of society must be evident. They place within the power of every man a larger share of enjoyment, and a greater portion of leisure. They thus give to every man, not only more time for intellectual cultivation, but also the means for improving that time with increased advantage. And if they do not render a man better educated himself, they render him sensible of his own deficiency, and awaken in him the desire, and furnish the means, of bestowing education upon his children. And hence, although the modes of education should undergo no improvement, there must result a more widely extended demand for mental improvement, and a more perfect and more powerful intellectual development.

But, *secondly*; The means of cultivating the human mind are also in a

course of rapid improvement. Time will allow me only to allude to a very few considerations, connected with this branch of the subject.

First; The object of education is becoming better understood. It has, in many places, ceased to be considered enough to infuse into the pupil certain sentences, or even certain ideas, which some time before had been infused into the instructer. It begins to be admitted, that education consists in so cultivating the mind, as to render it a more powerful and more exact instrument for the acquisition, the discovery, and the propagation of truth, and a more certain guide for the regulation of conduct. Hence it is now frequently conceded that education may be a science by itself, regulated by laws which require special study, and in the practical application of which, something more than a common degree of intelligence may be at least convenient. A higher degree of talent will thus be called to this profession, in every one of its branches. Division of labor will also produce the same beneficial results as in every other department of industry. And hence, as the object is better understood, as higher talent is engaged to promote it, and as that talent is employed under greater advantages, we may expect, in the rising and the succeeding generations, a more perfect mental development than the world has yet seen.

Again; It has, within a few years, been discovered that education may be commenced much earlier in life than was before considered practicable. Who would have supposed, unless he had seen it, that any thing valuable could have been communicated to an infant only two or three years old? Specially, who would have supposed that the memory, the judgment, the understanding, and the conscience of so young a child, were already so perfectly formed, and so susceptible of improvement? But recent experience has demonstrated, that a very valuable education, an education which shall comprise instruction in the elements of many of the most important sciences, may be acquired before a child is old enough to be profitably employed in muscular labor, and even while the care of it would be expensive to the parent. It has thus been made the interest of every one in the neighborhood of an Infant School, to give his children at least so much education as may be communicated there. And if I am not much mistaken, the instruction now given to infants, in these invaluable nurseries, is more philosophical, and does more towards establishing correct intellectual and moral habits than that which was attainable, when I was a boy, by children 12 or 14 years old, in grammar schools of highly respectable standing.

Allow me also to suggest an improvement, which, though not yet in practice, must soon follow in the train of the others of which I have spoken. I allude to the application of the science of education to the teaching of the operative arts. At present, a boy spends frequently seven years in acquiring a trade. His instructer, though a good practical artist, is wholly unacquainted with the business of teaching. Few will doubt that a man, who, with a knowledge of a mechanical art, should devote himself exclusively to teaching it, might, in a few months, communicate as much skill as is now acquired in as many years. The result would be, in the end, far greater excellency of workmanship; and, what is still better, much more time for obtaining an

education might be allowed to young men before they devoted themselves to the employments of life.

From these facts, the tendency of the present movements of society is obvious. It is, to furnish more leisure than formerly to the operative classes of society, to furnish them more extensively with the means of education, and to render that education better. They must, from the very nature of things, become, both positively and relatively, far richer, and much better informed, than they have ever been before. Now, as social power is in the ratio of intelligence and wealth; the astonishing progress of the more numerous classes, in both these respects, must be producing more radical changes in the fabric of society than were witnessed even at the period of the Protestant Reformation.

But these changes are going forward with accelerated rapidity in our own country. With profuse liberality, a bountiful Providence has scattered over our territory all the means of a rapid accumulation of wealth. Land, rich and unexhausted, adapted to the production of every article of luxury and convenience, stretches through every variety of climate. To peculiar natural advantages of internal communication, we add still greater capabilities of artificial improvement. The amount of our unappropriated water-power is incalculable; and in regions where this is less abundant, inexhaustible beds of fuel offer every facility for the employment of that incomparable laborer, steam.

This country also presents peculiar facilities for intellectual development. The political institutions of other countries rather retard than accelerate the progress of mental cultivation. With us, the absence of all legalized hereditary barriers between the different classes of society, presents to every man a powerful inducement to improve himself, but especially his children, to the utmost. In other countries, the forms of government, being unyielding, do not readily accommodate themselves to a change in the relations of society. Ours are constructed with the express design of being modified, whenever a change in the relation of the social elements shall require it. The history of our country, since the adoption of the federal constitution, has furnished abundant proof of the truth of these remarks. Every change in the state governments has been from a less to a more popular form. This at least shows, *first*, that the power is passing from the hands of the less numerous, to those of the more numerous classes of society; and, *secondly*, that there is nothing in the nature of our institutions to prevent its thus passing. It is our duty to provide that it be wielded by intelligence and virtue.

I hope sufficient has been said, to show that the period is rapidly advancing, when all, but especially the more numerous classes of society, will enjoy much more leisure for reflection, will be furnished with a vastly greater amount of knowledge, both of facts and of principles, and will be educated to use those facts and principles with far greater accuracy, and with far better success.

We will now briefly consider the *encouragements* which these facts present to an effort for the universal diffusion of Christianity.

First: The increase of wealth, and especially the consequent increase of

leisure, among the more numerous classes, is in many respects greatly favorable to the progress of religion. Moderate labor invigorates, excessive labor enfeebles, the intellectual faculties. He whose existence is measured by unbroken periods of either slavish toil or profound sleep, soon sinks in passive subjection to the laws of his animal nature. Lighten his load, and his intellect regains its elasticity, he rises to the region of thought, breathes the atmosphere of reason, rejoices in the discovery of truth, and feels himself a denizen of the universe of mind.

Again; The progress of education is rendering the human understanding a more successful instrument for the investigation of the laws of nature, both in matter and in mind. Hence has the progress of discovery been so rapid during the last half century—and we believe that the work has but barely commenced. We apprehend that the boldest imagination has never yet conceived of the exactitude and the extent of that knowledge which we shall acquire of the qualities and relations of the universe around us; and of the skill to which we shall yet attain, in subjecting them all to the gratification of human want, and the alleviation of human wo. Now, we believe that God made this universe; that he created every particle of matter, and impressed upon it its various attributes. We believe that this same Being also created mind and inspired it with its moral and intellectual capacities; and we believe that the attributes of matter and the capacities of mind, are all formed to harmonize with the moral laws contained in his holy oracles; so that in the end there shall not be found, throughout the wide universe, a floating atom which does not give testimony to the truth of revelation. Thus, to use the words of Foster, "Religion, standing up in grand parallel with an infinite variety of things, receives from all their testimony and homage, and speaks a voice which is echoed by creation."

Thus far, every discovery of science and every invention in the arts, has uttered its voice in favor of the Bible. Who can contemplate the relation of the various forces which move a steam engine, and the laws by which they operate, without seeing that all was devised by Infinite Wisdom, for just such a being, physical and intellectual, as man, to accomplish just such purposes as Infinite Goodness had intended? Who can contemplate the social circumstances under which man enjoys the greatest amount of happiness, without being convinced that the very constitution of man requires obedience to precisely such precepts as are contained in the Bible; that man is rewarded and punished on the principles which are there delineated; in other words, that the moral system of the Bible is the moral system of the universe? A striking illustration of the truth of the general principle to which I refer, may be found in the history of political economy. This science has been, to say the least, very successfully cultivated by men who had no belief in the Christian religion. And yet, reasoning from unquestionable facts in the history of man, they have incontrovertibly proved that the precepts of Jesus Christ, in all their simplicity, are the only rules of conduct, in obedience to which, either nations or individuals can become either rich or happy. So far as science has gone, then, every new truth in physics or in morals has furnished a new argument for the authenticity of revelation. Thus will it be to the end. Phi

losophy herself will at last show the principles of the religion of Jesus Christ, so legibly written on every thing else which the Creator's hand has formed, that it will be as impossible to deny the truth of the Scriptures as the law of gravitation.

Besides, not only does the present state of society promise that vastly more of these laws will be known, and their moral connexions traced—it is also rendered evident that the knowledge of them will be more widely disseminated. Improvement in wealth, and in the science of education, will render what is now considered erudition, common to the humblest member of the community. Thus the facts, on which may be constructed the most incontestible arguments in favor of religion, will be found in abundance in the mind of every man. Thus the *media* of proof are multiplied without number. Though ignorance be the mother of superstition, knowledge is the parent of devotion. Take any man whose soul has neither been brutalized by animal indulgence, nor his judgment radically distorted by incurable prejudice; open his eyes upon the universe as it actually is, with all its discovered and undiscovered variety of contrivances, and tell me, could he ever afterward be made an atheist? Or let him remark, through the history of ages, the consequences resulting to individuals and nations, from different courses of moral conduct; and could he ever afterward be persuaded that the Deity neither had made nor would maintain the distinction between virtue and vice? Or let him ask himself upon what principle it is necessary to act, if he would secure to himself any valuable result for the life that now is, and he will come to the conclusion, that in the things of this world, as well as of the other, success can only be expected from the exercise of faith and obedience. Nor is this all. A well-regulated mind not only knows that it is so, but is at every moment reminded of it. Every thing speaks to such a man of God, and God speaks to him in every thing.

Nor is this all. Not only does improved development of the human faculties furnish new proofs of the truth of revelation—it also renders the mind more susceptible of their influence. It is the business of education to deliver us from the tyranny of prejudice and passion, and subject us to the government of reason. Mind thus becomes a more delicate, a more powerful, and a more certain instrument. It yields to nothing but evidence; before this it bows down in reverential homage. Thus, effect upon mind will at last be calculated upon with almost scientific precision. Now it is to this very training of the intellectual faculties that the progress of improvement in education promises to conduct mankind; so much more favorable is the mind of the hearer or reader becoming, to the production of moral effect.

But we hope that this system of changes is not to be limited here. We believe that improvement in intellectual science, but above all, more elevated piety, and more ardent devotion, will yet confer some new powers of suasion on the Christian teacher. Every one must be sensible, that the Gospel is an instrument which has never been wielded with its legitimate effect, since the time of the Apostles. May we not hope that there are forms of illustration at present untried, that there are modes of appeal as yet unattempted, which, with an efficacy more certain than we any where now witness, will awaken

the slumbering conscience, and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, lead the awakened sinner to the cross of Christ.

Christian brethren, estimate, if you can, the importance of these facts. We have seen that every law of matter and of mind presents a separate argument in favor of religion; that the providence of God is multiplying, with a rapidity beyond precedent, both the number and the power of such arguments, that all classes of men are becoming more deeply imbued with a knowledge of them, and that this knowledge, from the improved discipline of the faculties, must produce a more certain and more salutary effect: consider, too, how the press is enabling every man to exert his whole moral and intellectual power upon the thoughts and opinions of mankind, and you will surely say, that never have there been presented so many or so great encouragements for a universal effort to bring the world into cordial subjection to Jesus Christ. The prediction seems already fulfilled, "The sons of strangers shall come bending unto thee." Following in the train of every art, and every science, infidel philosophy herself is seen presenting her offering at the feet of the Redeemer. Every thing encourages us to move forward, and take possession of the inheritance which Messiah has purchased with his own most precious blood.

There are, however, a few circumstances of encouragement peculiar to the condition of this country, to which I may be permitted for a moment to advert.

1. The proportion of truly religious persons is greater with us than in any other country. Perhaps it would not be too much to assert that their intelligence and opportunity of leisure are greater than fall to the lot of Chistians in any other nation. I hope that it may also with truth be added, that, notwithstanding the muitiplicity of sects, a much greater degree of good-fellowship, in promoting the eternal welfare of men, is found here, than has been commonly witnessed, at least in the latter ages of the Christian church.

2. We enjoy perfect civil and religious freedom. Every man may originate as powerful trains of thought as he is able, may give them as wide a circulation as he will, and may use all other suitable means for giving them influence over the minds of others.

3. Public opinion is here, more than it has been in other countries, friendly to religion. This land was first peopled by men who came here that they might enjoy "freedom to worship God;" and thus they proved themselves worthy of being the Fathers of an Empire. Our institutions, at their very commencement, received the impress of Christianity. The name and the example of the Puritans are yet held in hallowed recollection. We are enjoying the rich blessings purchased by their labors and their prayers. Our nation, wicked though it be, is not yet cursed with the sin of having deliberately rejected the Gospel. Our soil is unstained with the blood of the saints. We may hope, then, that our eyes have not yet been smitten with avenging blindness. And, in carrying forward her conquests, we may hope, that the church of God will have less opposition to encounter here, than she has met with elsewhere.

4. But it deserves specially to be remarked, that God has blessed, in a peculiar manner, the efforts that have been made in this country to check the

increase of vice, and promote the diffusion of piety. In illustration of this remark, I will not at present refer to the astonishing success which has attended the Bible, Sabbath School, and Tract Societies. I will mention only two facts, which, though not more important than some I omit, allow of being presented with greater brevity. The first is the effect which has been produced by the union of good men, for the promotion of temperance. But about four years have elapsed since this benevolent effort commenced. And already has it saved from worse than mere destruction several millions of the national capital; it has saved thousands of families from ruin; it has taught hundreds of thousands successful resistance to perilous temptation; it is purifying the atmosphere, which so soon must have poisoned the rising generation; its powerful influence is felt in every state, and, perhaps I may add, in every town and village, throughout the union; and is beginning to be felt in other lands. Travellers from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, tell us that the reform is strikingly manifest. The records of various religious denominations bear testimony to the same encouraging fact. We ourselves have witnessed, that in stage-coaches, and in steamboats, in public houses and in parlours, temperance is becoming more and more the habit of the people. The very traffic in ardent spirit is far from being reputable; and there is reason to hope that, in a few years more, this detestable leprosy may be banished from the land.

More especially, however, would I refer to the fact, that those seasons of extraordinary attention to the salvation of the soul, denominated revivals of religion, and produced, as we believe, by the special influences of the Holy Spirit, have been multiplied among us to a far greater degree than has before been known in any age or country. Almost every denomination professing Christianity has of late years been greatly augmented in numbers, and strongly excited to religious effort, in consequence of such revivals. Specially have these effects been visible among the young. Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes have, in a peculiar manner, been filled with that solemnity, which, turning the soul from the eager pursuit of pleasure and of sin, leads it to serious reflection, to unfeigned repentance, to faith in Jesus Christ, and to permanent and universal reformation. Now, it matters not what theory we may adopt in respect to this subject. We are all willing to be influenced by facts. The fact, then, we think, cannot be questioned, that events called revivals of religion are becoming very common among us, and that where they occur most frequently, a larger portion of the people become active and zealous Christians; and if this be granted, it is sufficient for our argument.

Behold, then, Christian brethren, the encouragement before us. We are citizens of a country whose uncultivated soil was moistened by the tears, and consecrated by the prayers, of persecuted saints; whose earliest institutions were formed under the auspices of the Bible; where every man may pray as much, and live as holily, as he will; where every man may circulate as widely as he pleases the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and, as eloquently as he is able, urge his fellow-citizens to obey it; and where God has been pleased to honor with his special benediction, every effort which has been made to arrest the progress of vice, and increase the influence of religion. What can we ask

for more? Why stand we here all the day idle? We see how glorious a success has attended our feeble and imperfect efforts. They have as yet been almost nothing, in comparison with the ability of the Christian church in this country. How few of us have even approached the point of self-denial in effort! And surely it is only at this point that real benevolence begins. Let us ponder what is our solemn and unquestionable duty: let us look at the wonderful blessing with which God has crowned our exertions; and I think we shall arrive at the conclusion, that with a corresponding degree of success upon such efforts, for the promotion of religion, as are palpably within our power, a revival of piety may be witnessed in every neighborhood throughout the land; the principles of the Gospel may be made to regulate the detail of individual and national intercourse; the high praises of God may be heard from every habitation; and, perhaps, before the youth of this generation be gathered to their fathers, there may burst forth upon these highly-favored States the light of the Millennial Glory. What is to prevent it? Let any man reflect upon the subject, and then answer. My brethren, I speak deliberately. I do believe, that the option is put into our hands. It is for us, in reliance on the divine blessing, to say, whether the present religious movement shall be onward, until it terminate in the universal triumph of Messiah, or whether all shall go back again, and the generations to come after us suffer for ages the divine indignation for our neglect of the Gospel of the grace of God. The church has for two thousand years been praying, "Thy kingdom come." Jesus Christ is saying unto us, "It shall come if you desire it."

Such, then, are some of the *encouragements* which the providence of God presents for attempting the universal promulgation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Motives equally strong may also be drawn from the fearful results which must ensue, if we prove unworthy of the high destiny which is now set before us. To these, however, time will only allow me very briefly to allude.

In no case does God array himself in more avenging majesty, than when he resents the misimprovement of unusual blessings, or the neglect of signal opportunities for usefulness. "Curse ye Meroz," saith the angel of the Lord, "curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof—because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." "And when Jesus was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, *If thou hadst known*, even thou, at least *in this thy day*, the things which belong to thy peace—*but now they are hidden from thine eyes*—for the days come in which thine enemies shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and shall not leave thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the *time of thy visitation*."

The spirit of these warnings applies with great emphasis to the church at the present day. With regard to society at large, it is evident that the changes which have commenced must either result in the universal diffusion of the principles of religious knowledge and civil liberty, or in the establishment of a more firmly riveted system of slavery than the world has yet beheld. The philosophy of Christianity is now generally well understood. Her points of contact with the human heart are discovered. The secret of her great

strength is revealed. Her enemies are rallying, and mean to regain the ground which they lost at the Reformation. Their resources are immense, and their wisdom has been gained in the most effectual of all schools, the school of reverses. Combining all their forces, and, with skill worthy of a better cause, adapting their weapons to the present state of society, they are preparing for one mighty, one universal onset. Christianity cannot safely remain in her present condition. Delay will be defeat. She must instantly seize the vantage ground, and march onwards, universally triumphant, or be driven again for ages to the dens and caves of the earth. Which shall she do? This question it is for the present generation to answer.

The period within which this question must be decided, may, in other countries, be prolonged; not so, however, in this country. Other governments may be kept stable amid political commotion, by balancing the interests and passions of one class of the community against those of another. With us, there is but one class—the people. Hence, our institutions can only be supported while the people are restrained by moral principle. We have provided no checks to the turbulence of passion: we have raised no barriers against the encroachments of a tyrannical majority. Hence, the very forms which we so much admire are at any moment liable to become an intolerable nuisance, the instruments of ultimate and remediless oppression. Now, I do not know that history furnishes us with reason to believe that man can be made the happy subject of moral government, in any other way than by the inculcation of principles such as are contained in the New Testament. You see, then, that the church of Christ is the only hope of our country.

I will not here ask, whether any thing has ever transpired within your recollection, in the history of our republic, at which a thoughtful man may tremble. I will not ask whether, when the most momentous questions are at stake, it be customary to address the passions or the reason and conscience of our fellow-citizens. I will neither ask, whether he would not be considered a novice, who was credulous enough to believe a mere politician honest, nor whether an utter disregard of truth be not avowed without a blush, as the principle on which are conducted many of the presses which politicians support. I will not ask, whether the most infamous want of principle has always obstructed the advancement of him, who has made his imposing voice heard amid the clamor of electioneering strife. Nor will I ask, whether there be not men deeply learned in the history of human affairs, who, overlooking the moral power that resides in the religion of Jesus Christ, have not already doubted whether such institutions as ours can long be perpetuated. I refer to these things, Christian brethren, to remind you how inevitable is the fatal result, if it be not arrested by the influences of Christianity. Good men should be aware of the fact, that even now not a moment is to be lost. When the statesman trembles, then it is time for the Christian to act. Unless prevented by the diffusion of religious principle, the wreck of our civil liberties is inevitable. But in the present state of society, civil and religious liberty must perish together. Then must ensue ages of darkness, more appalling than aught which this world in the gloomiest periods of her history has yet recorded. What form of misery will brood over

this now happy land, I pretend not to foresee. I cannot tell whether these solemn temples will become the resort of muttering monks, or of infidel bacchanalians. I know not, whether our children will worship a relic, and pray to a saint—or deny the existence of God, and proclaim "death an eternal sleep." I should rather fear, that neither of these woes would fill up the measure of our cup of trembling; but that some strange ministration of wrath, more terrific than eye hath seen, or ear heard, or the heart of man conceived, was yet treasured up among the hidden things of the Almighty, to be visited in vengeance upon the iniquities of a people who so signally slighted the day of their merciful visitation.

Fathers and Brethren; you behold the result to which we have been led. It is for us to decide whether the moral light, which has just begun to dawn, shall ascend to meridian glory, or whether for ages it shall be extinguished in darkness. It is for us to say, whether this nation shall first welcome the coming of Messiah, and rejoice in the earliest submission to his reign; or bear for ages the awful weight of divine indignation, for having, under such aggravated circumstances, rejected the offered mercy of God's well-beloved Son.

Men, Brethren, and Fathers; what shall we do? Shall the kingdom of Christ come, or shall it not come? But before you answer this question, it is proper to consider what the answer involves.

The kingdom of Christ will not come, unless an effort be made on the part of the church more intense and more universal than any we have yet seen. Little does it become me to speak in the language of a reformer. Yet you will, I trust, pardon me, if I, with diffidence, suggest some changes which must take place, before we can be prepared for the crisis before us.

In general, then, I would remark, that the providence of God calls loudly upon religious men, to be more deeply and thoroughly religious.

Too commonly now, the character of Christian is merged in the character of statesman, or lawyer, or physician, or merchant, or tradesman, or even of man or woman of fashion. I blush while I speak it, but it is too true; this age beholds *fashionable* disciples of a *crucified Jesus*. All this must, we think, be altered. If religion be any thing, it is every thing. If the Bible be not a fable, it is meet that every other distinction of a Christian be merged in that of piety. Our private history, the arrangements of our business, the discipline of our families, our intercourse with society, must show that we do really care very little about every thing else, if we can only promote the growth of vital piety in our own souls, and in the souls of others.

But to be somewhat more particular. New efforts are required of ministers of the Gospel. The times seem to demand that our lives be much more laborious than formerly. We must labor more abundantly in preparation for the pulpit; we must preach more, in season and out of season; we must visit our people more frequently, and more religiously; we must exhort more fervently; and thus make our moral influence more universally and more deeply felt upon all classes, but specially upon the young. If it be said, that clergymen are, generally, as laborious as their health will admit, we may grant it; but still, we would ask, might they not frequently obtain better health? Every one of us, surely, might understand and obey the laws of his animal economy.

If we would do this, we should less frequently complain of ill health. Besides, who of us, with the firmest health, has ever accomplished half the labor of Baxter, or Payson, who were invalids through life?

It will also be necessary that our efforts be more systematic. We act so much at random, that the labors of one day interfere with those of another, and thus much invaluable time is lost. Who, that has had the least experience in the ministry, does not see to how much better purpose he would have lived had he resolutely set about doing one thing at a time, and doing that thing thoroughly. Should every one of us survey the field which God has placed before him, and begin now to direct those influences, which, ten years hence, will be called into operation; and should we thus labor year after year upon the best plan that prayerful consideration will enable us to devise; would not our lives be spent to vastly better effect?

Again: The approaching crisis will demand a greater amount of intellectual vigor. The work will call for strong arms, and for very many of them. Ministers will find it necessary to devote themselves more resolutely to severe studies, to original thinking, and to every sort of discipline which may render the mind a more efficient instrument for swaying the opinions of men. Perhaps it will not be amiss to add, that the present state of society seems specially to demand of us a more profound knowledge of the evidences of revelation; of the various connexions which God has established between moral laws and the laws of the universe about us; and a deep and intimate acquaintance with the unadulterated oracles of divine truth, if possible, in the languages in which they were originally written.

But more than any thing else, do we need improvement in personal piety, in the experience of religion in our own souls. We must approach nearer to the luminary, if we would reflect more of its light. Nothing but ardent love to God, and unshaken trust in his promises, will animate us amid the labors to which the necessities of the church will call us. In the absence of these, we have no reason to expect that the influences of the Holy Spirit will attend our efforts, without which, they would be as unable so excite a holy volition, as to create a world. When ministers thus labor for Christ, thus love Him, and thus trust in Him—then may we hope to see the blessings of the day of Pentecost descend upon our churches.

But the principles which apply to a minister, apply also to every Christian man. I add, then, secondly, the necessities of the church require new efforts of laymen. The religious man, every where, and at all times, must show himself a devoted Christian.

It is necessary that Christians begin to use their property as stewards. The principles of the Gospel must be carried into the business of our everyday expenditure. We must sacrifice to Christ our love of pleasure, of ostentation, and of accumulation; or we must cease to pray, "Thy kingdom come." I see men professing godliness, spending their property profusely, in obedience to all the calls of a world that knows not God; or else hoarding it up, with miserly avarice, to ruin the souls of the rising generation; but I confess, I do not see how they will answer for it "to the Judge of quick and dead."

The cause of Christ, also, requires of laymen a far greater amount of

personal exertion. Suppose ye, that in apostolic times, the claims of religion would have required of a disciple, nothing more than a small portion of his income? When the time was come for the church to be enlarged, they that were scattered abroad, went every where, preaching the word. Now we do not say, that you are required to be preachers; but we do say, that religion requires you to consider the promotion of piety in the hearts of men, as an object demanding your highest efforts. The management of the religious charities of the day belongs to you. It now comes principally upon the clergy. Its tendency is to render them secular. It makes them men of dexterity, rather than of deep thought and commanding eloquence. The cause would gain much by a division of labor. Brethren, you are called upon to come forward and relieve us from this service. But yet more—every man who knows the value of the soul, may speak of its value to his neighbor. Every man of ordinary abilities, who feels the love of Christ, may give profitable religious instruction to youth and children. The promotion of piety, in the hearts of others, should enter as much into every man's daily arrangements, as the care for the body that perisheth. When this spirit shall have become universal, something will be done.

Do you say, that you have not the requisite information? I ask, does it require much information, to remind men that they are going to the judgment seat of Christ? But I say again, why have you not the information? That intellect is by far the most valuable, as well as the most improvable possession, with which God has intrusted you—why have you not rendered it a better instrument to serve him? Every Christian, in such a country as this, may be, and ought to be, a well-informed man.

And, lastly; As intimated before, the cause of Christ requires of private Christians, as well as of clergymen, deeper humility, more fervent piety, and a life of closer communion with God. Your money and labors, as well as our studies and preaching, will be despised, unless they be the offering of holy hearts. All, all, are utterly ineffectual, unless the Spirit descend upon us from on high. Our alms will be as water spilt upon the ground, unless our souls are fired with the love of Christ, and our hearts temples for the residence of the Holy Ghost.

You see, then, what is required. I ask again, Christian brethren, are you ready for the effort? Shall the kingdom of Christ speedily come, or shall it not? You have seen the option which the providence of God has set before us. You have seen, so far as ourselves are concerned, on what that option is suspended. What will you do? I put the question to the understanding, and the conscience of every man. Do you not believe that by proper effort the liberties of this country may be secured—and that, without it, there is every reason to fear they will be irrecoverably lost? Do you not believe, that, by such an effort, thousands of souls may be saved from eternal perdition—and that, without it, those souls will not be saved? Do you not believe, that, if such an effort were made, in entire dependence on the Spirit of God, this country would be subjected to Jesus Christ—that his kingdom would come, and his will be done throughout our land—and that, if it be not made, there is every reason to fear, that his kingdom will not come for ages? Do you not believe, that there is no time to be lost—but that every thing de-

pends upon the men of the present generation? You are then in possession of all the facts necessary to a decision. You stand in the presence of Him who died to redeem a world lying in wickedness, and at whose bar you must review the resolution of the present moment. In the presence of that Savior, redeemed sinners, what will ye do?

Time will barely suffer me to allude, in the briefest manner, to that species of religious effort which has given occasion to this address. You cannot, however, fail to see, that if ever the Gospel is universally to prevail, it must be by such efforts, under God, that its triumph will be achieved. By furnishing employment for talent of every description, the Sabbath School system multiplies, almost indefinitely, the amount of benevolent effort, and awakens throughout every class of society the dormant spirit of Christian philanthropy. It renders every teacher a student of the Bible; and thus, in the most interesting manner, brings divine truth into immediate contact with the understanding and the conscience. All this it does to the teacher. But, beside all this, the Sabbath School is imbuing what will, twenty years hence, be the active population of this country, with the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is teaching that class of the community, into whose hands so soon the destinies of this country will fall, the precepts of inviolable justice, and eternal truth. But more than all, it is implanting in the bosoms of millions of immortal souls, "that knowledge which is able to make them wise unto salvation, through the faith that is in Christ Jesus." How transcendently glorious are the privileges before us! Who will not embark in this holy enterprise?

One remark more, and I have done. I see before me the representatives of a very important portion of the Christian church. We are assembled in the midst of a city, renowned for its deeds of mercy. The effects of our decisions may be felt in the remotest hamlet in the land. To us is offered the high honor of giving an impulse to this work, that shall afford cheering promise of its speedy consummation.

Suffer me, then, in the name of the omniscient Savior, to ask, What will you do? Let every minister of the Cross here ask himself, Why, even during my own lifetime, should not the millennium commence in my congregation? Here, then, before the altar of God, let us dedicate ourselves anew, and in the strength of Christ resolve that we will henceforward live with direct reference to the immediate coming of his kingdom. Professional men, before you rest to-night, will ye dedicate that intellect, with which God has endowed you, with all the means of influence which it can command, to the service of your Redeemer? Men of wealth, as ye retire from this place, will ye collect the title deeds of that property, which Providence has lent you, and write upon them all, "Holiness to the Lord?" A thousand times have we said that we would do all this. Let the Spirit witness with our spirits, that we do it now in view of the judgment seat of Christ. Henceforth, in the Sabbath School, in the Bible Class, and in the use of all the means which God has placed in our power, let us labor to bring this world under the blessed reign of the Redeemer—or let us cease to pray, "Thy kingdom come." May God enable us to act worthy of his cause; and to his great name shall be the glory. AMEN.

REFLECTIONS AGAINST THE BAPTISTS REFUTED.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT THE

DEDICATION OF THE BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE

IN

NEW-BEDFORD, OCT. 22, 1829.

BY DANIEL SHARP,

PASTOR OF THE CHARLES-ST. BAPTIST CHURCH, BOSTON.

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SERMON.

ACTS xxviii. 22.

BUT WE DESIRE TO HEAR OF THEE, WHAT THOU THINKEST: FOR AS CONCERNING THIS SECT, WE KNOW THAT EVERY WHERE IT IS SPOKEN AGAINST.

NO wise man thinks it necessary to refute every insinuation which may be made to his disadvantage. Conscious of the rectitude of his motives, and of the habitual correctness of his deportment, he will trust to the impression which his conduct leaves on the community, in preference to personal explanations. Nor will he, pursuing a course which his conscience dictates to be right, be diverted from it by unkind remarks. If, indeed, some grave and weighty charges should be alleged, which may destroy his good name, or bring into disrepute principles which are dear to him, then he will consider himself called upon to defend his reputation, and to show that his sentiments have been unjustly assailed.

We see in the case of an individual the wisdom of such a procedure. And we believe its adoption by a church, or a denomination of Christians, is

equally proper. It is generally best to be heedless of indefinite censures; and to show by pureness, by knowledge, by Christian charity, and by faith unfeigned, that our good is evil spoken of, and that the censures which are cast upon us, are undeserved. Should it appear, however, that by misconception or misrepresentation our doctrines and practice are likely to be neglected, or treated with contempt, then we owe it not only to our blessed Master, but to ourselves, to exhibit our views of them clearly and explicitly, that if others will traduce either them or us, they may be left without excuse. But in doing this, we should avoid all bitterness and invective. We should "speak forth the words of truth and soberness, and in a spirit of meekness, and by manifestation of the truth, commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

We have regretted extremely, that very mistaken opinions have prevailed, and that very incorrect statements have frequently been made, concerning the sentiments which distinguish us as a Denomination. We have been accused of attaching an unreasonable importance to the ordinance of baptism, and of inflicting a great injury on our children by withholding from them a rite which would introduce them to a participation of covenant blessings, and render more certain their receiving that religious instruction, which would make them wise unto salvation.

It is probable that many have given currency to these accusations without due consideration. They have relied too implicitly on the representations of others without making suitable inquiries for them-

selves. Perhaps many, without being conscious of it, have been influenced by the prejudices of early education, and have too readily taken for granted, that all the unfavourable reports they have heard of us were true. So strong have been their antipathies, that they have been unwilling to listen to an impartial and full disclosure of our views: And a few, it is to be feared, in their opposition have been actuated by less worthy considerations.

If incorrect impressions of our denominational views, involved no other consequences than what might be deemed personal, namely, some reflection on our ignorance, credulity, or bigotry, we might go on, unmindful of the censure, having the testimony of a good conscience in the sight of God; but so far as these impressions cause any to slight an institution appointed by the Saviour, a regard for his authority should induce us to remove them if possible, by a candid exposition of our sentiments.

The Dedication of this neat and commodious House to the public worship of Almighty God, seems to be a suitable occasion for the discharge of a duty which we think we owe to ourselves and to the cause of truth. I trust, my friends, that you feel the same magnanimity which the "chief of the Jews" displayed, when Paul requested permission to explain to them the principles for which he was bound with a chain. They replied with a spirit worthy of Rome in its best days: "We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against." Be assured, my hearers, that it is not my intention

to use the language of recrimination. In reviewing the charges which have been brought against the denomination, it will not be for the purpose of exciting unpleasant feelings, in any one, but simply to show that they have no just foundation. With this explanation of my feelings and motives, I shall now proceed to consider some of the allegations which have been made, concerning our views in relation to baptism.

1. Our restriction of this ordinance to believers only, has been represented as fraught with danger to the salvation of our children. Plausible attempts have been made to sustain this charge by referring to two causes. It has been said, that parents who do not dedicate their children to God in baptism, are not so deeply impressed with a sense of their obligation to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and that unbaptized children are left to the uncovenanted mercy of God. These, my friends, are statements of serious import, and demand our special attention. If they are true, it behoves us immediately to abandon our present limited practice, to extend the rite to objects that are so dear to our hearts, and to imitate our brethren who have acted more piously and kindly towards their offspring.

But in reply to what has so often been reiterated against us, we must remark that we do not admit its truth. In confining the rite of baptism to believers, we do not feel, on that account, the less obligated to promote the present and eternal welfare of our children. Nor can we conceive how we possibly should, unless we believed that this ordinance, when

administered to infants, first calls into exercise parental affections, and constitutes the basis of parental obligation. Neither of which opinions can by us for a moment be admitted.

The hour which brings a child into existence, brings with it parental love. The associations which its entrance into being awakens, call forth a mother's tenderness, and a father's care. Its tears of helplessness, and its smiles of innocence, do but strengthen the new impulse, which its first appearance powerfully excited in the breasts of its parents. Our beneficent Creator has not left the welfare of our children to depend on an outward rite, but on the affections of our nature deeply seated in the heart.

We must know, if we are Christians, that our obligation to bring up our children in the fear of God, cannot rest on any external ordinance whatever, but on the close and endearing relations in which we stand to them and to our Maker. Our duty to provide for the wants of our children, to pray for them, to give them religious instruction, and to restrain them from evil, rests on obligations which are immutable. It arises from the nature and fitness of things, and can neither be diminished nor increased by any formal or public dedication of them to God. We believe that every parent should "train up his children in the way that they should go;" but we believe also that this duty is not founded on what has been denominated "the mere form of a ceremony," but on our natural and moral relations.

There are, no doubt, too many instances of professors of religion among us, who neglect the reli-

gious interests of their children. Alas! my hearers, I am afraid that we who are parents come far short in this duty. But what I insist upon is, that it is not the withholding of baptismal water from our children, which occasions our neglect, but the want of a more deep, enlightened, and habitual spirit of piety.

2. But it is said, that in not bringing our children to the holy ordinance of baptism, we leave them to the uncovenanted mercy of God.

If there is such a covenant, and baptism is the seal or confirmation of its blessings, then we are verily guilty of a great dereliction of duty. Let us for a moment examine this subject. A covenant is an agreement by which a person engages either conditionally or unconditionally to perform certain things, or to bestow certain favours. Before then we can claim a title to certain and special privileges by virtue of a covenant in our favour, we must prove that such a covenant has been made, and that its provisions extend to us. When a person dies and leaves a testament or covenant, his possessions must be distributed according to the specifications contained in that covenant. If no such instrument can be found, then the law provides for the distribution of his wealth.

In the case before us, good men have taken a fact for granted of which there is no proof. The Almighty has made no covenant with the infants of believers. We have carefully examined and re-examined the sacred writings, and can find no such document. After all our search, and we have not been

remiss, for we have children in whose salvation we feel as deep and tender an interest as do our brethren of other denominations, we can discover no such instrument, much less its specifications or conditions. Nor is there, so far as we understand the register of heavenly deeds, the least intimation, that baptism is the seal or ratification of its blessings. If there is such a will or covenant for the children of Christian parents, we have yet to learn that it has ever been produced, or set up, or approved, by the Judge.

But we are told, that this covenant was originally made with Abram and ratified by the rite of circumcision, that it is still in perpetuation, and ratified now by baptism in the place of circumcision. It is true, that the Lord did make a covenant with Abram and his posterity, in which the blessings entailed are distinctly specified. He promised* that he would multiply him exceedingly; that he should be the father of many nations; that his descendants should be honourable, for kings should come out of him; that they should have the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and that he would be their God. But in this covenant there is no promise of spiritual blessings to his posterity, except so far as external religious privileges may be deemed such. There is no engagement that his natural descendants as such should be heirs of eternal life. We need no other evidence of this than the fact that some of his immediate posterity died in impenitence and guilt, and

* Genesis xvii. 1—8.

that the Jews as a nation were finally rejected for their disobedience. He promised to the patriarch that he would be a God to his seed after him; and he was so, as he was their lawgiver and protector, and revealed to them his will, and established among them the ordinances of religion. But he was not their God in such a sense as necessarily includes the bestowment of divine pardon in this life, and bliss in the world to come. We think the apostle has clearly established this point. When urging on the Jews the necessity of internal piety, or "the circumcision of the heart," and assuring them that without this the outward circumcision would be of no avail, he meets the objections which he knew would be made. Rom. iii. 1, 2. "What advantage then," he asks, "hath the Jew; or what profit is there in circumcision? Much every way: *chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.* Here he plainly states that the chief blessing resulting to the Jewish nation from circumcision was their possessing the oracles of truth.

If, however, the Lord had actually made a covenant with Abram which contained the promise of spiritual blessings to all his posterity, this would supply no evidence whatever that similar blessings are promised to the children of believing Gentiles, unless it should appear that there is a special grant in that covenant which includes them. Where then, we ask, is the covenant made to the children of Christians? On what page of inspiration is it to be found? What are the blessings which it promises? Are they conditional or unconditional? And are the

supposed blessings realized? How does it happen, that a majority of those who are said to be in this covenant, and have had the seal of baptism impressed upon them, are among the children of disobedience? What has this covenant done for them, more than for those who are represented as being left to the uncovenanted mercy of God?

There is, my hearers, no such covenant. It is one of those fictions of theology, appertaining to a darker age, which are fast passing away. And we rejoice that some of the most learned and pious of our Pedobaptist brethren have candour to acknowledge in their intercourse with us, that the covenant made with Abram, and the rite of circumcision, have no bearing on infant baptism, and that the latter ordinance has not been instituted in place of the former.

"There is," says Dr. Emmons, "no evidence, in the New-Testament, that believers are now in the covenant of circumcision; but clear evidence to the contrary. For, they are neither under obligation to perform the duties of that covenant, nor entitled to any of its peculiar blessings. The bond of that covenant does not lie upon them; for they are not required to *circumcise* either themselves or their families. And it is equally evident, that they are not entitled to any of the peculiar blessings of that covenant. In that covenant, God promised to give Abraham a numerous posterity; but he makes no such promise to believers under the gospel. In that covenant, God promised that Abraham's seed should possess the land of Canaan; but he makes no such promise to believers under the gospel. In that cov-

enant, God promised, that Abraham's seed should enjoy great *temporal* prosperity; but he makes no such promise to believers under the gospel. In that covenant, God promised, that the Messiah should descend from his family; but that promise was fully accomplished at the incarnation of Christ."

Even those who still imagine that they can see a striking resemblance between the sign of circumcision and that of baptism, and who confidently assert that great benefits accrue from the latter, are not agreed as to what they are. It is the opinion of some, that "baptized children may, in a very important, though a qualified sense, be considered as infant members of the Christian church." Others on the baptism of a child feel themselves authorized in saying, without any qualification, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy church." Such is their confidence in the virtue of "the laver of regeneration by baptism," that they say, "it is certain by God's word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved;" thus intimating, that the eternal happiness of infants dying unbaptized, is uncertain. With the Bible in our hands we think it strange that the application of water in any form should be viewed as affecting the salvation of infants. We believe in their glorification after death, not because there is any moral efficacy in baptism, which makes them meet for heaven, but because God is just, and good,

and merciful, and because there is a plenitude of grace in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But why is there such a diversity of opinion, as to the blessings which God has provided for the baptized children of believers? Why all this uncertainty as to the nature and extent of the privileges to which they are entitled? Why cannot learned and pious men who believe in the existence of this covenant, agree as to the blessings it bequeaths? It would be considered strange in human affairs, if those who were interested in the testament of a person who had left large possessions, should acknowledge that they could not understand its import. If, after the most diligent and learned investigations, they should form extremely different conclusions, it would be fair to infer that the testator did not know the meaning of language, or that he intended to mock their hopes. But no one will thus dare to impeach that infinitely wise and faithful Being, who established the covenant of circumcision with Abram and his posterity. Why then, we repeat the question, do good men, who believe in the existence of a covenant which, they say, confers special favours on the children of Christians, on whom its seal has been affixed, differ so widely in opinion as to its character? We answer, because there is no such covenant, no such privileges, no such seal.

We feel it our duty to say more. It does appear to us, that a belief in the existence of such a covenant is not only unscriptural, but injurious in its tendency. We think it is calculated to quiet the consciences of young transgressors. Should they feel

conscious that their ways are displeasing to God, and experience momentary apprehensions of future wrath, may they not cling to the hope, that as their parents placed them in infancy within the limits of a covenant of mercy, they will eventually be saved? We speak from facts which have come under our own observation, when we say that there is danger, lest the young should depend on receiving the favour of God from some imagined privileges of descent, instead of earnestly seeking it for themselves. Many, it is feared, instead of forsaking their sins and believing in the Saviour, have trusted to what the supposed covenant with its seal would mysteriously effect for them, to the undoing of their souls. Religion is a personal thing. Whatever, therefore, withdraws the attention from the necessity of personal efforts in seeking salvation, by directing it to the fancied privileges of natural descent, or to what others have done for us at an unconscious period of our existence, is of dangerous tendency. Such we solemnly believe is the tendency of the doctrines which attribute "to baptism itself a mysterious inherent efficacy," and teach that the children of Christians are in a "covenant—spiritual, gracious, and immutable."

II. We have been accused of believing that baptism is a saving ordinance. And as we have reason to fear that many have given credit to this accusation, it is proper to say, that no representation can be farther from the truth. We do believe that baptism was instituted by the Saviour, to be observed by all his disciples. We therefore submit to it as an expression of our regard for his authority and of our love

to his name. But every one, by acquainting himself with our practice, may know that we hold no such sentiment as has been ascribed to us. Our churches invariably require satisfactory evidence of all candidates, that they are in a state of salvation, before they receive them to this rite. Like the harbinger of the Messiah, they ask for fruits meet for repentance; or with the evangelist they say, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized.

Besides, we do believe, that a multitude of Christians, which no man can number, who never were baptized, will enter the kingdom of heaven. We know that education and early attachments; the opinions of others, and the authority of great names, may either prevent persons from inquiring concerning this duty, or give to their investigations a wrong direction, and yet they may manifest such unaffected piety, and exhibit so much loveliness of character, that we are neither able nor willing to withhold our cordial affection from them as the disciples of Christ. Nor have we the least doubt concerning the future glory that awaits them.

Nay, more—we are fearful that some who have been baptized will be found on the left hand, in the day when God shall judge the world in righteousness. If, soon after his baptism, Simon Magus, was declared to be in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity, we have reason to fear that others who have put on Christ in this ordinance, may be in a condition equally awful. If any have been influenced merely by secular motives in making such a profession, if they have only attended to the external

forms of religion while they were destitute of its power, they will find that the waters of a flood had no efficacy to cleanse them from their transgressions. It has never been a part of our creed, that baptismal water could possibly purify any one from moral pollution. We have always maintained, that if a person went down into the water the slave of sin, he would come up out of it in the same miserable bondage, except with the increased guilt of having added to his other sins that of formality or hypocrisy.

III. The charge has often been made, that we substitute baptism for personal piety—so often, indeed, that many really believe we lay more stress on this ordinance, than on a holy life. It is said that even "gospel ministers have been actuated by such an intense zeal in favour of one particular form of this external rite, that they have seemed almost inclined to make it the sum of all religion." We can only say that we know no one to whom it would not be great injustice to apply these remarks. If there have been persons either in public or private stations, whose conduct has merited this censure, they certainly have acted inconsistently with their baptismal engagements.

We view baptism itself as a public and solemn declaration, that we are dead to sin, and that we are determined henceforth to live unto righteousness. "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death! Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the

Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."* We have always avowed, and in our church discipline have acted on the principle, that no external rite, ever can be a substitute for a pious and moral life. We require of those who unite with us, proof of the sincerity of their profession, by adding to their "faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." For we are persuaded, "he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

Where the works of the flesh are manifested in the life of one who has been baptized, and in the exercise of Christian charity received into the church, he must, according to our practice in the exercise of Christian fidelity, be excluded. It is a faithful saying, and these things we would affirm constantly, that they who have been baptized should be careful to maintain good works. We do hope, therefore, that we shall not again be unkindly charged with "substituting an excessive zeal for an outward rite, in the place of pure love to Christ, and to the immortal souls of men."

IV. Perhaps no censure of us has been so generally believed, or operated so much to our disadvantage, as the imputation that we are an extremely bigotted people. This is a stigma from which we would vin-

* Romans vi. 3, 4.

dicate ourselves. Bigotry is a blind zeal; an unreasonable attachment to certain opinions or practices. As we do not like the name, so we pray that we may never exhibit the character of bigots. We think, however, that an honest attachment to principles, and a conscientious conformity to the laws of Christ, are not bigotry. It seems to us that a strict observance of the order of Christ's house is not only reasonable, but perfectly consistent with the manifestation of the kindest and most respectful feelings for those with whom we do not walk in church fellowship.

The charge of bigotry, is chiefly founded on the fact, that we do not receive to the Lord's table, Christians whom we consider unbaptized. Our reasons are these. We believe that in the days of the Apostles, persons were invariably baptized before they were admitted to the Christian church; and that this arrangement should still be sacredly observed. This belief has led our churches to require that all who participate with them in the supper, shall have been baptized. Our conduct in this case does not originate in prejudice or caprice. We claim no authority to impose such a regulation, but we believe that our Lord has imposed it, and that we are bound to carry his regulations into practice.

We trust then we shall be credited when we say, that in not receiving our unbaptized brethren at the sacramental board, we are not influenced by any unkind feelings. For many of them we cherish sentiments of unfeigned affection and respect. But we love our Master more, and we feel persuaded

that we should depart from the established order of his church were we to admit to his table those who have not previously been baptized.

If, my friends, we err on this point, we certainly are not alone. With few exceptions all Christian denominations practise on the belief that baptism is a prerequisite to a participation of the Lord's supper. They admit none who have not in their judgment been baptized. The principle on which we and all other denominations act in this instance, is precisely the same. We may all be in an error. But until other Christian sects shall have discovered that the omission of baptism does not disqualify persons for suitably partaking the memorials of the Saviour's death, we must say, that they cannot censure our practice without condemning their own.

Besides, we are prepared to commune with all Christians in the noblest and most scriptural import of that expression. It has often been *significantly* remarked, "you will not commune with us now, but we shall all commune together in heaven." We rejoice in the blissful anticipation. But we are not willing to wait until that period. We would enjoy here an earnest of that sublime and celestial intercourse. We plead for a communion on earth, with Christians of every sect, which shall bear a resemblance to that of heaven. We do not suppose that the communion of "the just made perfect," consists in partaking of the symbols of Christ's death, but in high and spiritual intercourse; in mutual expressions of admiration and gratitude while reviewing the dispensations of providence and grace towards

them in this world; in mingled songs of praise to Him who hath washed them from their sins in his own blood; and in exalted converse concerning the glorious scenes which the revolutions of eternity will be continually unfolding to their delighted gaze. In such communion as this, although of a more humble character, we would gladly participate with all good men.

It would seem from observations which are frequently made, that there is no such thing as Christian communion, except at the table of the Lord. This we conceive is a great mistake. There is undoubtedly a communion of saints in this rite, but this is an incidental circumstance, rather than the special design for which it was instituted. This will more fully appear, by considering attentively the language of the New Testament on this subject. "Take, eat," said Jesus, "this is my body which is given for you: *this do in remembrance of me.* After the same manner he took the cup, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: *this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.* For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, *ye do show the Lord's death until he come.*" The Apostle Paul states most distinctly the particular object of this feast, when he says: "The cup of blessing which we bless, *is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?* The bread which we break, *is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*"* Here is no intimation, that our Lord appointed the supper as a token of the communion which Christians have with

* 1 Corinthians x. 16.

each other. It was evidently intended for other and more important purposes. It was to be a perpetual memorial to his disciples of his bleeding and dying love, conveying the assurance, that although absent in person, yet he is ever mindful of their interests. And while it represents in appropriate and affecting emblems his unparalleled compassion, it gives vigour to their faith, animates their hope, and increases the ardour of their devotion and love. Hence the "cup of blessing which we bless, and the bread which we break," are not mentioned as means by which saints are to commune with one another, but by which they are graciously assisted to commune with Christ in his sufferings and death.

It is greatly to be lamented, that the controversy concerning the prerequisite for suitably communicating at the Lord's table, has given rise to incorrect views. The attention of Christians has been diverted from the chief design of the institution, that of "discerning the Lord's body," and fixed almost exclusively upon it, as the divinely constituted medium for manifesting their fellowship with each other. Thus weakening its legitimate effects on the heart, by considering that as its leading object which, at most, is only incidental.

But, my friends, if we are sincerely desirous of living in communion as becometh saints, there is a more excellent way, than even assembling together at the Lord's supper. It is better enjoyed, and more nobly illustrated in kind Christian intercourse; in abstaining from all unnecessary causes of strife; in bearing with each other's errors and imperfec-

tions; in mutual disclosures of our fears and hopes, our joys and sorrows; and in affectionately aiding each other onward, in the path to heaven. Should such be our conduct, then will ours be the communion of saints, although we may be connected with different sections of the church universal.

If the remarks which have been made in this discourse are just, we learn the importance of constantly guarding against a hasty and uninformed judgment of other denominations. We should never substitute suspicions for facts, nor ascribe to others sentiments which they uniformly and publicly disavow. As the consequences may be more extensively injurious, so it is far more censurable to circulate evil reports against a whole sect, than it is to take up a reproach against our neighbour. In the latter case only one may suffer, in the former the religious character of thousands is involved. Nor should it be deemed a sufficient apology, that we *thought* we were speaking the truth. We should be sure that our representations are true.

Let us, my friends, cultivate that "charity, which thinketh no evil; which doth not behave itself unseemly; which rejoiceth not in iniquity. but rejoiceth in the truth." If we should hear any thing said to the disadvantage of another denomination, let us think it possible that it may be untrue; and if necessary that we should form our opinion, or act in relation to such a statement, let us do it understandingly, impartially, charitably. Our text furnishes us with a laudable example of candour. The Jews

were strongly prejudiced against Christianity; but when in Rome, Paul sought an interview with the most eminent among them, and they said, "We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against." Their conduct is worthy of our imitation. Let us, then, never attempt to promote truth and piety by bitterness, and wrath, and evil speaking. Such a course is directly adverse to the benignant and peaceful spirit of Christianity. It widens the divisions which unhappily exist among good men, and what is still worse, it confirms unbelievers in their prejudices against the gospel: For, instead of being compelled to exclaim, "See how these Christians love one another!" they point with triumph to their dishonourable quarrels.

We also learn that popular opinion is no test of truth. The first Christians were every where spoken against. To the Jews, the cross of Christ was a stumbling-block; and to the Greeks it was foolishness. The doctrines which the Apostles preached were spoken of as the babblings of ignorant men; and their practices brought upon them the charge of an unnecessary singularity. They were esteemed fools for Christ's sake. They were "buffeted, reviled, persecuted, defamed, and made as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things." But amid all this clamour, and ridicule, and opposition, they were right. They had the truth on their side, and were approved of God.

If you are desirous of knowing whether the views and practices which distinguish our denomination

from others, are correct, neither ask the many nor the few, the learned nor the ignorant, the rich nor the poor, but search the Scriptures. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We are willing, nay, we are desirous, that our sentiments should stand or fall, as a just investigation of the Bible shall determine.

Let it be your concern, brethren, to show by a kind temper, and a godly conversation, the excellence of your principles. "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. Put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created him." We trust you will need no "epistles of commendation," to exalt you in public estimation. Let your conduct so speak for you, that you shall be known and read of all men, as "the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. Ye have received the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore walk ye in him. And as you have been buried with him in baptism, show also that ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Then, although we may be absent in the flesh, yet we shall be with you in spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ."

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED FEBRUARY 25, 1820,

AT THE

Funeral

OF

REV. JAMES M. WINCHELL, A. M.

Late Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Boston.

BY THOMAS BALDWIN, D. D.

Pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Boston.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY JAMES LORING, NO. 2, CORNHILL.

1820.

AT A MEETING OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH AND SOCIETY, IN BOSTON, FEB. 27, 1820,

Voted, That Deacon P. Snow, jun. Deacon J. Loring, and Major Oliver Johonnot, be a committee to wait on the Rev. DR. BALDWIN, and present the thanks of this Church and Society for his appropriate and sympathetick Discourse delivered at the interment of our late beloved Pastor, Rev. JAMES M. WINCHELL, on Friday last, and request a copy for the press.

JAMES LORING, Moderator.

BOSTON, FEB. 27, 1820.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH AND SOCIETY IN BOSTON.

Gentlemen,

At your request, a copy of the Sermon delivered at the Funeral of your late lamented Pastor, (though prepared under peculiar disadvantages, arising from bodily indisposition,) is, with a few verbal alterations, most respectfully submitted to your disposal,

By, Gentlemen,

Your affectionate and sympathizing Friend,

THE AUTHOR.

Dea. JAMES LORING, Moderator.

FEB. 29, 1820.

SERMON.

JOHN v. 35.

HE WAS A BURNING AND A SHINING LIGHT.

THESE words contain a part of the honourable testimony, which our Lord bore to the character of John his forerunner. He had on a former occasion testified, that among all that are born of women, there had not risen a greater than John the Baptist. Prophets, who foretold the coming of Christ, also predicted, that a messenger should go before his face. "This is he, (said Jesus) of whom it is written; 'Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.' "

John was, indeed, more highly honoured than any of the prophets which preceded him. They prophesied of Christ; and of the manner in which his coming should be announced. They beheld in perspective the child born, the Son given, and the government securely resting on his shoulder. They saw the herald which was to go before his face; and heard the voice, crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert an highway for our God. The history that is given us of John, though

brief, is nevertheless highly interesting. The peculiar circumstances of his birth deserve our notice. An angel was sent from heaven to announce to Zechariah, the joyful tidings of a son. He also predicted what manner of child he should be. "Thou (said the angel to the astonished father) shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Time flew rapidly over the intervening period, from the birth of John until his appearing in public, without recording a single event in his history, excepting, that "the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his shewing himself unto Israel."

John's ministry, though unadorned with Jewish rites, was peculiarly luminous and instructive. His fame spread throughout Judea, and multitudes repaired to the Jordan to hear his doctrine, who were baptized upon their profession of repentance. His ministry, according to Prideaux, continued three years and a half. During this period, he was actively engaged in preparing the way for Christ, by calling the people to repentance, and proclaiming the approach of the Messiah.

The purity of his life, the simplicity of his manners, the novelty of his doctrine and practice; and above all, the ardent zeal which he manifested in calling sinners

to repentance, shed a new light on the cause of virtue and religion, and a happy reformation succeeded.

This holy man discovered an undaunted faithfulness in preaching, seldom equalled, perhaps never excelled by any man since. With what plainness he reproved the haughty, self righteous pharisees, one of the most powerful religious orders among the Jews! "O generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Nor did he spare a royal offender; but with all plainness and fidelity reproved Herod, for his incestuous marriage with his brother Philip's wife, who was still alive. For this he was imprisoned,—and ultimately fell a martyr to his faithfulness. Herod, in his rage, would have probably dispatched him at once, but for the fear of an insurrection. He afterwards seems to have been softened; but Herodias, that insidious, licentious woman, more persevering and unrelenting in her resentment, could never be satisfied until John had atoned for his rashness by the forfeit of his head.

When John's disciples heard of the fate of their Master, they *came and took up the body and buried it; and went and told Jesus.* To whom else could they go? How suddenly was this bright luminary extinguished! Not, indeed, by the immediate hand of God, but by the murderous hand of a vile assassin! Thus fell, in the bloom and vigour of life, this holy prophet, this eminent preacher. "*A Nazarite,* who was purer than

snow, and whiter than milk; and whose soul was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb!"*

Those who were looking for redemption in Israel, hailed the birth of John as the *morning star*, the sure precursor of the Sun of righteousness.

Though John was cut off from the earth at this early period, no stain attaches to his character! This rests upon the highest authority. The Saviour, in the language of our text, has raised an imperishable monument to his fame, which will preserve it with honour to the remotest ages of time. *He was a burning and a shining light, and ye* (said Jesus to the Jews) *were willing for a season, to rejoice in his light.*

From the text thus largely opened and explained, we shall avail ourselves of the interesting declaration, *He was a burning and a shining light*, as applicable to the present occasion.

We trust we shall not be charged with flattery, by any that knew our dear brother deceased, if we say, that as a man of taste, of genius, and of literature; as an humble, enlightened christian; as an able, faithful minister of the New-Testament; and as an amiable companion and sincere friend, he might be truly considered as *a burning and a shining light.*

Let us dwell for a few minutes on each of these particulars.

1. As a man of fine taste and genius, he shone with no ordinary light in the republic of letters. The God of nature had endowed him with talents, that were highly respectable. His powers of mind were clear and discriminating, and in philological accuracy he

* Lam. iv. 7. Luke i. 16.

was surpassed by few of his years. His penetrating mind could at once look through a subject, and discern all its various bearings and relations, which to minds differently constructed, would appear extremely perplexing and obscure.

As a correct, classical scholar, he held an honourable rank among men of letters. Few young men have discovered a more ardent zeal for knowledge, especially theological knowledge, or sought its attainment, with more unremitting diligence, than Mr. WINCHELL. Had it pleased Heaven to have allowed him a longer date, we have no doubt but the world would have done him the justice to have acknowledged him a profound scholar, and able divine.

Perceiving the disadvantages that many young men of promising talents, labour under for want of education, he took a very interested and active part in different societies, formed for the purpose of assisting them in the acquisition of such literary and theological attainments, as would render them more generally acceptable, and more extensively useful in the cause of God.*

2. *As an humble, enlightened Christian.* In all which that sacred name imports, our dear brother deceased, shone with a mild radiance, which tended to edify and comfort, to instruct and allure others to the love of virtue and holiness.

We are fully aware, that talents and learning, if unsanctified by grace, whilst they excite admiration and respect, may serve only to dazzle and bewilder the mind, until it is lost in the intricate mazes of er-

* Mr. WINCHELL was President of the Young Men's Auxiliary Baptist Education Society in Boston. This Society consists of 318 members.

ror and delusion. But where grace is implanted in the heart, by the renovating influence of the Holy Spirit, religion shines with a brighter lustre, and displays her charms in a more lovely and attractive light.

The religion of our deceased friend, as far as we can judge, was of the genuine Christian stamp. It did not, on the one hand, consist of crude, undefinable notions and feelings, which never influence the life and conduct; nor on the other, of those cold speculations which freeze the holy fervours of the soul, and forbid its approach to every thing which has the least appearance of spiritual life and animation. But it was a steady flame, that warmed as well as enlightened; a pure, perennial spring, that flowed with the "water of life."*

Mr. WINCHELL, in the 17th year of his age, about the time he became a member of Union College, hopefully experienced a change of heart. Some time after, he was baptized at Northeast, in the State of New-York, (his native town) and became a member of the Baptist church in that place. The last year of his collegiate course was at Brown University, where he graduated in September, 1812.

After preaching about one year in Bristol, (R. I.) he was invited to the pastoral care of this church.

His religious views and feelings may be collected from what he has written at different times. In a sermon, which he published about two years since, addressing the church, he says, "I will only observe, that as I was in the beginning, so I continue to be with you in weakness, and fear, and much trembling. Conscious of my own deficiencies, I need your

* John vii. 38.

prayers, as well as your indulgence; and while I mourn that I am able to serve you only in so imperfect a manner, I ought to unite with you in thanksgiving to God, that our union has been attended with so many tokens of divine approbation, and that so goodly a number has been added to the church.

"Although most unworthy, I occupy the place of the tenth pastor of this church; and am stimulated to pursue with diligence the acquisition of knowledge and the discharge of my duties, by the consideration that four of my immediate predecessors have been men highly distinguished on the list of ministers, who have been favoured with a liberal education, in the Baptist denomination. But above all, I am stimulated by the consideration, that the vow of the Lord is upon me; that I am not my own; that I am accountable to God and my brethren for the manner in which I discharge my duty. I address my fellow beings, whom I am soon to meet in eternity, and the blood of souls will be required at my hand, if I be found unfaithful."

Much interesting matter might also be collected from his diary; but our limits will permit us only to make a few brief extracts.

May 15, 1819, he writes thus;—"Troubled much with gloominess and depression of spirits for two days past, owing partly to ill health, and in part to a dreadful stupidity and coldness in divine things. O Lord, awaken me by the powerful energy of thy Spirit! O send down thy gracious influence to melt this frozen, rocky heart! How astonishing that I should feel so little of that love, which ought at all times to warm the heart of a Christian, and especially of a Christian minister.

"To-morrow will be the Sabbath. How shall I be prepared to come before the people, unless I have Christ in my heart? Come, thou divine Saviour, help me to prepare for thy service, and to preach thy name to precious and immortal souls."

He preached for the last time in Beverly, on Lord's Day, the 18th of July last, three sermons. He was taken immediately unwell, and never preached afterwards.

August 4, he writes as follows;—"My indisposition continues, although a little abated. I am not anxious to order my own affairs, because I know that they are in the hands of One who cannot err. Should I not recover my strength so as to be able to speak again in the name of my Master, it would indeed be a great affliction; and more still, should I live a useless life. My family!—I dare not think of leaving it. But I am not distressed about it. I am like the mariner who commits himself to the mercy of the sea, trusting in God to prosper his way. Should I be taken away either suddenly, or by a *lingering consumption*, the loss to my dear wife and children would be great indeed. But I am happy in being able to commit them to a kind Providence, who has promised to be the widow's husband, and a father to the fatherless children." This is the last article which I find recorded by himself.

He was conscientious and uniform in discharging all the various duties of his holy profession. His faith and practice were not the effect of tradition or of human creeds, but were founded on the authority of the holy scriptures, which he read for himself. From a full conviction of their truth, he embraced and preach-

ed that system of doctrines, generally acknowledged by the churches of our denomination. Without pretending to give a detailed account of these, we may just observe,—He considered that the divinity and atonement of Christ offer the only scriptural foundation of hope for guilty man; that we cannot be justified by the deeds of the law, but by believing on him that justifieth the ungodly. These truths, with others necessarily connected with them, he held fast until the close of life.

His personal experience of the power of the gospel, which has been already mentioned, had a happy influence upon his temper and conduct, in all the different situations of after life. It was this which supported him in the near prospect of death, and cheered and strengthened his hopes of future and eternal glory.

In his diary for October, 1818, he says;—"I do not feel any presentiment of my near approach to death, yet I am reconciled to the will of the Lord, to go just when he pleases. I am not conscious of any thing which should forbid my being prepared at any moment, except my great sinfulness: but I never expect to be perfect in this world. My only hope is in Christ, and would be so, were I to live a thousand years."

3. *As an able, faithful minister of the New-Testament*, it might well be said of him,—*He was a burning and a shining light.* His public discourses were always sensible and judicious, and frequently discovered much thought and reading. They were such as *became sound doctrine.* He appeared like a scribe well instructed in the kingdom of God, and constantly brought out of its treasury things new and old. His sermons, whether doctrinal, practical, or experimental, were ad-

dressed to the heart; and to the conscience. He knew how to point the artillery of the *word* against the strong holds of sin, and to array the divine law in all its terrors against the workers of iniquity. He also was prepared to speak a word in season to him that is ready to faint. When he saw the sinner trembling under a deep sense of guilt, and ready to give up all for lost, with a heart melting with compassion, he

> "..... whisper'd peace,
> "In strains as soft as angels use."

A considerable number, who are the seals of his ministry, have, during his life, professed their faith in Christ. We trust that many more will be found in that day, when God shall reward every man according to his works.

There are many here, we have no doubt, who will bless God to eternity, that they were ever brought under the sound of his voice; and that he was made the happy instrument of leading them to Christ.

Perhaps there are others present, who have often heard, but never profited; to such it ought to be a subject of deep regret, that they will see his face no more!

Those solemn warnings and fervent exhortations which fell from his lips, will not be lost. If listened to in time, they may yet prove a savour of life unto life; but if disregarded, they will prove a savour of death unto death.

4. We proceed to consider our brother deceased, *in the endearing relations of a companion and friend.* "A friend (saith Solomon) loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Such a friend is truly estimable, and such a brother is worthy of that endearing name.

There are some persons of whom we have hope, that they are truly gracious, but whose natural dispositions are so unamiable, that one could hardly wish an intimacy with them. But the temper of our deceased brother was the reverse of this. He ever appeared to us to be without deceit or guile, and free from malice and envy; his heart seemed to be formed for friendship. His professions were more than words of course.

I must be allowed to mention one other trait in his character, and one which the Apostle has made necessary to the qualifications of a bishop, i. e. that *he must be given to hospitality*. How far he exemplified this amiable disposition, many of his ministering brethren, as well as others, can bear honourable testimony. He was highly esteemed by all his brethren in the ministry. They regarded him as a judicious, faithful friend, and as an instructive, amiable companion. Among those who were most intimately connected with him, this friendship was mutual and uninterrupted until death dissolved their connexion.

In his family, as in the more public walks of life, his conduct was dignified, yet mild; correct, yet affectionate and tender.

But whence all these amiable qualities which we have described? They were evidently not less the effect of a mind richly imbued with the genuine spirit of the gospel, than of a natural amiableness of disposition.

He was deeply sensible of the depravity of his own heart, and acknowledged all his hopes to be founded in the merits of a crucified Redeemer. His language, just before his death, when conversing with a friend, was,—*by grace, I am what I am.*

It is hoped that nothing which has been said, will be construed as the language of flattery or exaggeration; as nothing surely can be farther from my heart. If any thing should seem to bear such an aspect, let it be imputed to an ardent attachment which commenced with our first acquaintance, and which has been cemented by habits of intimacy until the day of his departure to another world.

I might proceed to a further exemplification of his character; but calling to mind a remark which he made to me a few days before his death, and perceiving the same sentiment recorded in his diary, I shall briefly dismiss this part of the subject. He said to me as follows: "I hope there will not be too much said of me when I am dead." The following is found in his diary for 1815:—"Should it please God to take my life by any sudden stroke, I desire that nothing may be said respecting me, that shall not tend to exalt the grace of God, in bestowing mercy on so great and vile a sinner as I am. I have done nothing that is worthy to be mentioned in my funeral sermon; nothing compared with what a redeemed sinner ought to do, for the honour of Him, *who died, the just for the unjust;* and upon whom all my hope rests for future happiness."

It is pleasant to perceive the abasing views which he had of himself. But these serve to render his character more estimable in the view of others. We are fully sensible, that he had nothing but what he received; and therefore had no right to glory in any of his attainments. But we may, and ought to acknowledge the goodness of God, in bestowing gifts and grace upon him, by which he was so eminently qualified for the work of the ministry.

Was he a burning and a shining light? It was light reflected from the Sun of Righteousness. Was he disposed to think meanly of his own attainments; and to take his place in the dust? It was because he had learned of him, who was meek and lowly in heart. But God in his mysterious providence, has cut short a life which promised so much usefulness; and however dark and trying to us, we rest satisfied, that the Judge of all the earth does right. The span allotted him on the earth was finished! He had reached the utmost bound of his habitation; and was not permitted to pass it. His work is done, and his account closed for eternity! He has finished his course with joy, the ministry which he received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. You, my weeping friends, will see his face no more! You will no more hear his voice! Those hands so often lifted in supplication, now lie cold and motionless. The soul has escaped from its clay prison, and nothing remains but the mortal part. May God prepare us all to follow him. The mournful occasion on which we are convened, calls for our tenderest sympathy with the bereaved widow and relatives of our deceased friend.

My respected, mourning Sister! our hearts are grieved for you, when we reflect on the painful loss you have been called to sustain. God has seen fit, at this early period, to take from you one of the tenderest and best of husbands. The same event has bereaved your children of a most affectionate father, who should have been the guide of their youth. But you have much to comfort you in the midst of this deep affliction. It is God who has done it; and you know that he does not grieve willingly, nor afflict any of the children of men. Was

not his voice distinctly heard by your deceased friend, saying, "Leave thy fatherless children, and I will preserve them alive, and let thy widow trust in me?" We in some measure realize the pains which you now suffer, in the loss of your dearest earthly friend. We are sensible, that nothing earthly can fill the aching void, which this bereavement has occasioned in your heart. But cannot the all-sufficient God, who is your covenant God? Is not he abundantly able, and will he not supply all your wants?

Let me exhort you then, my mourning friend, to cast yourself, with your dear fatherless babes, upon his gracious care; for he careth for you. He is not unmindful of your labour of love towards your deceased friend. He knows all the distress you have suffered, while watching the rapid progress of his disorder. He has seen your anguished heart torn, with all the deep solicitude which the tenderest affection could excite. Your tears, though unavailing, have not been offensive to a compassionate Redeemer, who himself wept at the grave of Lazarus! To God, who has deigned to style himself the widow's God, we earnestly commend you; beseeching him to be your friend and protector through all the journey of life, and at last to receive you to the bosom of his love, where all tears shall be wiped away.

We commend the bereaved brother present, the father absent, with all the other relatives and friends, to God, who hears their sighs, and who sees and can wipe away their tears. May this painful visitation be improved by each, as a means of exciting them to greater diligence in the Christian course, and in an actual preparation for their own departure.

With the members of this ancient and respectable Church, we affectionately mingle our tears and our sympathies.

Dearly beloved,—God, in the accomplishment of his inscrutable purposes, has again called you to mourn the loss of an endeared Pastor! *He was a burning and shining light,* and for a season you have been willing to rejoice in his light. He that walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and who holds the stars thereof in his right hand, has seen fit to extinguish this light, or to remove it to shine in a higher firmament.

Almost thirty years have elapsed since my first acquaintance with you. For many years before and after, you enjoyed an uncommon degree of prosperity. With your then Pastor, the Rev. Dr. STILLMAN, I enjoyed the most endearing intimacy. We often took sweet counsel together, and walked in company to the house of God.

Thirteen years within a few days, since we assembled in this house to mourn with you on a similar occasion, to pay the last tribute of respect to his remains, and to convey them to the silent tomb.

What changes have passed over you, my brethren, since that time! Surely enough to show you the vanity of all created things, and to teach you to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils.

Your widowed state, then, however, was not of long continuance. In about five months after the decease of Dr. STILLMAN, the Rev. Mr. CLAY, who had been previously invited, was installed over you as your Pastor. Your prospects again brightened, and joy spread over the countenances of the whole congregation. From

the eminent piety and talents of such a Pastor, and from the elevated rank which he held in society, you had much to expect. But, alas, what is man! How were your hopes blasted, when ill health obliged him, in the course of fifteen months, again to return to the South. His health still declining, after an absence of about two years, (and as part of his family were in Boston,) he returned again to this town. But after languishing a few weeks, he fell asleep, as we trust, in Jesus!

From the time of Mr. CLAY's departure for the South, to the settlement of your late Pastor, between five and six years elapsed. During which period, you were supplied with occasional preaching.

On the 30th of March, 1814, Mr. WINCHELL was installed in the pastoral office of this church and congregation.

On that joyful day, we little thought that you would so soon be left again in a widowed state. You are to-day probably looking upon the dark side of the cloud, and are ready to ask, What shall we do? Where shall we look for another Pastor to go in and out before us, and to break to us the bread of life? You can hardly realize that the man, whom you so tenderly loved, and whose labours you had fondly hoped to enjoy for many years, is now no more! His sun is set in a cloudless sky, and he has retired to rest!

A considerable number of the younger members of this church are the seals of his ministry. You, my dear young friends, witnessed the tender solicitude which he manifested towards you, in the day of your trouble. You found in him the heart of a friend and a brother. How patiently he heard your tale of wo,

and how cheerfully he endeavoured to impart instruction! But he now "rests from his labours, and his works do follow him."

May the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls watch over and preserve you. May the Lord keep you from grievous wolves, should they attempt to enter in among you, such as would not spare the flock: and may none be suffered to arise from among yourselves, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. To God and to the word of his grace, we most affectionately commend you; exhorting you to "remember them who have had the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation; Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and forever."

The members of this religious Society will permit us to express our sympathies with them.

I know not, my dear friends, whether your loss, or that of the church is the greatest. They have lost their beloved teacher, but we trust they have not lost his instructions. But we fear *you* have lost both. Does not conscience constrain some of you to say, "Well! he has been faithful to my soul, and I shall be obliged to acquit him at the bar of God, if I am lost forever." O remember, sinner, you will hear his warning voice no more. You must now

"———bid a long, a sad farewell,
"To the pale lump of lifeless clay."

The young people in general, of this congregation, and the young gentlemen in particular, I know were tenderly attached to our deceased brother. You had reason to love him; for he laboured without ceasing for your best good. His great concern was to make you wise and happy. May the many counsels and

warnings he has given you, be deeply engraven on your hearts; and remember, that although dead, he yet speaketh.

When David pronounced that most touching eulogy upon Saul, who had been slain upon the mountains of *Gilboa*, he called upon the daughters of Israel, saying, "*Weep ye over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.*" But your deceased Pastor, my fair young friends, recommended to you ornaments, far richer than these. He wished to see you adorned in the perfect righteousness of Christ; and with that lovely, meek, and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God, is an ornament of great price.

This solemn providence addresses this audience at large, and those in the ministry in particular. We lately, my brethren, were called to mourn with a sister church on a like occasion. Their beloved pastor* had been suddenly removed in the bloom of life. He too was a burning and a shining light. We sincerely loved him, for the truth's sake that dwelt in him, as well as for his other amiable qualities. Thus, brethren, one light after another is extinguished from off the walls of Zion. How are we admonished "to work the works of him that sent us while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work."

This text had been selected by our brother deceased, several years before his death, for the subject of his funeral sermon. Had it come to my knowledge seasonably, I should probably have addressed you from it to-day. The state of his mind, in reference to the solemn work in which he was engaged, and the vast importance of working while the day lasts, may

* Rev. Joshua Huntington.

be easily perceived in the faithful, persevering manner in which he pursued it. May it serve as a solemn memento to each one of us. The person who addresses you, may be considered as a candidate for the next call; but we are taught, by the event before us, that no age is exempt. In view of that solemn account which we must shortly render to our Judge, let us with all diligence and fidelity work while the day lasts, that we may finally receive the plaudit of "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

Each individual of this numerous assembly is solemnly admonished, by the mournful occasion which has called them together to-day, to remember that they are all children of mortality; and that they must soon go the way whence they will never more return. The language of this affecting providence is, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." There is no discharge in this warfare. If prayers, or tears, or medical skill could have availed, then our *brother* had not died.

But Heaven's high decree must be obeyed. "It is appointed unto men once to die." *But I heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.* AMEN.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSES.

In the press, and in a few weeks will be published, by James Loring, No. 2, Cornhill, price 31 cents,

THE Second Edition of TWO DISCOURSES, exhibiting an Historical Sketch of the First Baptist Church in Boston, from its formation in Charlestown, 1665, to the beginning of 1818. BY JAMES M. WINCHELL, A. M. PASTOR OF SAID CHURCH.

ORIGIN AND FORMATION

OF THE

BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

GRANVILLE-STREET, HALIFAX, NOVA-SCOTIA,

CONSTITUTED ON THE 30th OF SEPTEMBER, A. D. 1827,

IN WHICH SOME NOTICE IS TAKEN

OF THE

INFLUENCE OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH,

AND OF THE

MOTIVES WHICH INDUCED A RECENT SEPARATION

FROM THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.—1 Thess. v. 21.

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1828.

PART I.

Influence of Evangelical Truth.—Prevalent Error in Religion.—Separation from the Establishment.—Church Discipline.—Baptism.—Correspondence to obtain a Minist er.

IF the histories of nations and the biography of distinguished individuals merit the place they occupy in the studious attention of mankind; the dealings of God in his Providence must, certainly, present a theme of no less interest and importance. This, perhaps, is generally felt to be true, with reference to the varied course of human events, as leading merely to temporary results; but how vastly magnified is the claim made on our earnest consideration, when the effects of these events are not limited to the narrow confines of time, but swell the spreading circles of their influence through the boundless extent of an infinite existence.

In this view the attention of the Public is invited to the following Sketch, the object of which is, briefly and with simplicity, to take a review of some of the most striking particulars connected with the recent establishment of a Baptist Church in Halifax. The friends of this little Society will not be unwilling to receive a more detailed and correct narrative of its formation than common rumour is likely to convey; and, if any important instruction should fail to be communicated, yet, as a portion of the Religious History of this rising Colony, and of the Community of Halifax, a memoir of this sort may be not altogether devoid of general interest.

Some years have now elapsed since several instances occurred, among the members of the Church of England in these Colonies, of the influence of those views of divine Truth which have, in modern times, been sometimes designated by the epithet "Evangelical." These views may be portrayed in a few words. They comprise a conviction of the mind and heart, that, as sinners in the sight of God, we, by nature, lie under a just sentence of eternal wrath; that salvation from this state is to be found only in the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ, by faith in him; that this faith is the "gift of God," who, by the influence of his Spirit,

produces it in the soul, and thereby regenerates the subject of this influence, and renews him in the spirit of his mind, excites in him an aversion from sin, and enables him to resist and overcome its power in proportion to the degree of his faith in the Word of God.

Such, briefly, may be received as the distinguishing features of these views; and, if no more were sought than an abstract statement of them, the present memoir might seem to demand no further enlargement on this subject; but when the minds of any who trust they have been, in however small a measure, made partakers of the "unspeakable gift" of God, are thus led to retrace a path of unutterable mercy, once more to meditate upon the steps of a deliverance which no mortal tongue can fully declare, and thus, as it were, to act over again scenes fraught with an interest and a significancy which eternity alone can measure, it is difficult for such to confine their remarks to a bare and succinct specification of the doctrines which wrought in them that marvellous change at which angels rejoice (1); the memory of the past recalls many an affecting passage in their religious experience, when their hearts have yearned over those to whom the story of what they had heard, and seen, and felt, was, as it were, "a certain strange thing," or a "cunningly devised fable." Such feeling is naturally rekindled by the recollection; and it may plead their apology, if, through the means of this memoir, they beseech the attention of their friends, and of all under whose notice these humble pages may fall, to a plain and unaffected relation of that great thing which, they trust, the Lord has done for their souls.

There was a time when they were ignorant of the spirituality and extent, the length and breadth, of the divine law, which regards not merely outward actions, but takes cognizance of the thoughts, intents and motives of the heart—a time when they "drank iniquity like water;"(2) or, if education, or convenience, fear, or the love of reputation, preserved them in that course of moral conduct which is consistent with the good order of decent society; yet were they destitute of genuine religion; they lived, in reality, without God in the world; they sought not his glory; they delighted not in his service; prayer and praise, instead of being sweet privileges, were irksome and barren duties; they sought their own way, and were "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;"(3) and thus, (however specious their exter-

(1) Luke xv. 10. (2) Job xv. 16. (3) 2 Tim. iii. 4.

nal garb of morality or religion,) continuing in effect to hate the ways and the presence of him in whose favour alone is life and peace, they must finally have sunk down into the awful place whence his blissful presence shall be forever withdrawn, and where the fire of eternal wrath shall dry up every fountain of joy.

But the Gospel of Jesus Christ is well described in his word, as "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;"(1) and this Gospel it was which aroused them from their slumber. It had long been neglected; or perused, either with a careless and listless inattention, or with utter ignorance of its spiritual import. But now its truths came "as arrows of the Almighty:" now its declarations shone forth as traced in characters of celestial brightness; the condemning law of God uttered its denunciations as with the trump of an archangel; and how should those who heard the accents of Eternal Truth pronouncing that the heart of man is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;"(2) that "the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;"(3)—how should they any longer cherish the delusive hope that any goodness or righteousness subsisted in them? or, how should those whose ears were opened to the divine denunciation, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," (4) and "cursed is every one that continueth not in all the things which are written in the book of the law to do them,"(5) fail to perceive that the most entire corruption and inability or settled indisposition to do good, is accompanied with an awful sentence of just and eternal indignation?

Thus far, then, was the Word of Truth already experienced to be the power of God, producing a thorough conviction of sin, in its condemning and its polluting character, and tearing away that cloak of self righteousness which cleaves so closely to the human mind, unawakened by the Spirit of God.

A ruinous and wide spreading error on this subject is abroad in the world, coeval with the fall of Adam, and deeply rooted in the heart of every natural man; until taught by the Spirit of Truth, he will not admit his utter helplessness and depravity; but the Gospel is addressed to none other than the depraved and helpless; Jesus Christ came "to seek and to save that which was lost:"(6)

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(1) Rom. i. 16. (2) Jer. xvii. 9. (3) Rom. viii. 7.
(4) Ezek. xviii. 20. (5) Gal. iii. 10. (6) Luke xix. 10.

Every right reception of truth must, therefore, commence with the knowledge and conviction that we are lost sinners; without it we cannot believe in Christ Jesus for salvation. Proud man rejects this humbling view of human nature; he cannot consent to abandon the flattering idea that, amidst the moral ruin that his heart exhibits, still, there may remain some inherent goodness which only needs to be excited and improved, some worthy disposition which, if not altogether, yet in part may win his way to heaven; and thus, if he do not venture so far as entirely to rob the Saviour of the glory of salvation, he at least will dare to divide it with him, and to claim a participation in the merits of him, concerning whom an apostle has said, "there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."(1) This is a most pernicious and destructive sentiment, utterly hostile to the whole tenor and spirit of the Word of God, who has revealed himself "a jealous God," and one that "will not give his glory to another." Here, it is conceived, consists the grand distinguishing peculiarity, at the present day, between the doctrine of those teachers who exhibit Jesus Christ as he is revealed in Scripture, and those who, with whatever plausibility of argument, with whatever eloquence of language, they may adorn their subject, and obscure their real meaning, are yet preaching altogether another Gospel than that preached by our Lord and his Apostles. In contending against this error it was that the martyrs and heroes of the Reformation laboured, and wrote, and died: and, for a time, the influence which survived them quelled this anti-Christian spirit in the Reformed Churches. But error is vigorous and buoyant. The same views against which their most strenuous efforts had been directed, gradually usurped the pulpits once filled with the brightest ornaments of Protestantism; the sun of that Gospel Era again set in clouds; and hence, there are at this day to be found, throughout the Protestant World, innumerable teachers who make no *clear* distinction in addressing their audiences, between believers and unbelievers—between the regenerate and the unregenerate—between the righteous and the wicked: they appear to regard it as a conceded point, that all who hear them, except open and avowed infidels, are, of course, believers in Christ. Hence it is, that men continue blind to the truth, that, if ever they come to participate in the blessings of re-

(1) Acts iv. 12.

demption, it must be through a conviction of their individual need of redemption, of their utter inability, either in whole or in part, to help or redeem their own souls; and thus, through this ignorance of the utterly depraved character of human nature in God's sight, a tempting bait is offered to the natural pride of man, and a league is formed with the willing traitor in his heart; he is seduced off the only ground where safety is to be obtained, and beguiled to certain ruin. Thus it is that men cry "Peace, peace, when there is no peace;"(1) that they remain pleased with themselves, and know not that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."(2) The plain meaning of the Scripture which testifies, "they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick,"(3) is disregarded; and while in their ignorance of the deep root of their spiritual disease, they are ready to conceive it possible, yea, secretly believe that there really may be righteous men who need not the Gospel remedy; and they fail to perceive that they place themselves on the same ground on which stood the proud Pharisees to whom those words of our Saviour are applied, and forget that he has declared that if our righteousness exceed not theirs, we cannot enter into the kingdom of God.(4)

This too prevalent ignorance of the awful evil of sin, and of its universal dominion over human nature, has naturally led to a proportionate neglect or perversion of the doctrine of regeneration. The necessity of an entire change of heart by the operation of God's Holy Spirit has been well nigh lost sight of. Pride appears to be, as it were, the groundwork of the whole character of man. Until, therefore, he is utterly separated from any refuge in himself, his pride will make him cling to the fond though faithless vision of his native righteousness. Hence the completeness of that change which is necessary, is marked in striking language in the Scriptures. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be *born again* he cannot see the kingdom of God," was the declaration of Jesus Christ, solemnly announced to the amiable but ignorant Nicodemus. For "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." Again, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.(5) In conformity with their divine Mas-

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(1) Jer. vi. 14. (2) Rev. iii. 17. (3) Luke v. 31.
(4) Matt. v. 20. (5) Matt. xviii. 3.

ter, do we find the apostles testifying that "he that is in Christ is a new creature;"(1) that "if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his;"(2) and designating the subjects of this divine transformation as "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."(3)

Clearly as these truths are revealed in the Sacred Volume, the pride of human wisdom rejects them with derision, and thus exemplifies the apostolic declaration that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned."(4) And yet these mysterious truths are by no means inconsistent with the soundest philosophy. Why should the doctrine of regeneration be regarded as absurd? We might with propriety adopt, in this case, the language of the apostle in another; "why should it seem strange to you that God should raise the dead?" Why should it appear more extraordinary that he should raise the spiritually dead? Is it not, on the contrary, evident, that if men are dead in trespasses and sins, they must be thus raised to newness of life by a supernatural power?—that if they are entirely corrupt, they must have a new spirit given them, before they can have any sincere desire to do good?—that if their hearts are by nature "enmity against God," a *Creative Power* of sufficient energy must remodel them, before love can reign instead of hatred? He that is in Christ, as has been shewn, is a new creature, or new creation;(5) and what power is adequate to the task of renovating the whole constitution of a spiritual existence, but the mighty one "whose path is in the great waters, and whose footsteps are not known?" The truth respecting his state in the sight of God, is indeed unwelcome to blind man. He is wont to call those his enemies who declare it plainly. But how absurd and unreasonable, how awfully dangerous is this! Let reason exercise herself, unrestrained by prejudice, and we might appeal to the common sense of all: To whom, we would ask, is the gratitude of mankind most justly due; to those who deny the grand truths which have been stated; the entire depravity of the heart, in respect to holiness; the deep malignity and universal prevalence of sin; the necessity of regeneration by the power of

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(1) 2 Cor. v. 17. (2) Rom. viii. 9. (3) John i. 13. (4) 1 Cor. ii. 14.
(5) 2 Cor. v. 17. Καινὴ κτίσις.

God's Spirit; and justification by faith alone, that is, *gratuitous* salvation to the believer in Christ Jesus; and, denying these, effectually conceal from their own view, and from that of their perishing fellow mortals—the friend from his friend—the parent, perhaps, from his own child—the pastor from his flock—that disclosure of their real situation in the sight of God, which might lead them to seek deliverance?—To those who, by this means, become participators and accessaries in the universal ruin of mankind, and render the solemn and mysterious scene acted on Calvary a matter of comparatively small moment? Or ought not rather this tribute to be cheerfully rendered to those more faithful disciples of the cross, who, beholding in the sufferings of him that died "the Just for the unjust," the most emphatic evidence of these important doctrines, are ready, with benevolent courage, to rush into the desolation that error has diffused through the world, and though they meet with hatred, opposition, and contumely, yet, knowing truth to be the only means of overcoming this very hostility and reproach, the only remedy for the universal and ruinous disease, fearlessly proclaim to man his real state, and direct him to his only refuge?

But that Gospel which is "the power of God" had yet to complete its office in the hearts of the Christian friends whose history we trace. While the Scriptures of Truth discover the carnal heart to be enmity against God, deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, the benevolent Saviour has also declared that he came "to proclaim liberty to the captives;" "to bind up the broken hearted;" "to seek and to save the lost." What intelligence more joyous and suitable to those who, now, with brokenness of spirit, mourned over their depraved and captive state! With wonder they beheld the condescension of God; with joy they reflected, that this was the message not of feeble and erring man, but of Jehovah, "who cannot lie." They heard!—They believed!—and thus, through faith, did the Gospel become to them "the power of God." Now was sin for the first time perceived in somewhat of its real deformity, in some degree of its native malignity. On account of sin Jesus was crucified—on account of that accursed thing, he died, that they might live. Thus, with the eye of faith, perceiving the Son of God in his gospel character, they

realized in him that wonderful personage, of whom the brazen serpent in the wilderness was a feeble, indeed, but apt illustration; and, as the Israelites, bitten by the fiery serpents, looked on that mysterious image and were healed, by the simple operation of faith in the promise of God; so did these sinners, made sensible of the hatefulness and burthen of their sins, by faith in the Word of Truth, look to the crucified Saviour, and find him to be their only rest. And henceforward, knowing that they are not their own, but are "bought with a price," no less a price than the precious blood of Christ, they desire no longer to live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again, and "ever liveth" to intercede for his believing and obedient people. Henceforward, has the world lost much of its captivating charms; that has ceased to be a grievous command which directs them, "Love not the world, nor the things of the world;"(1) and it no longer alarms them to know that "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are not of the Father, but of the world,"(2) and that he who loves the world loves not God;(3) for now they grieve at nothing more than the prevalence of worldly desires in their souls; they desire nothing more earnestly than that the love of God may reign in them without a rival. And henceforward, in proportion as faith dwells on that mysterious sight which first wrought this mighty change, in equal proportion sin is subdued, and holy dispositions are created. Some of the individuals alluded to might, perhaps, be ready to shrink from this description, as representing a measure far beyond their poor attainments in the divine life: but, however tremblingly faith may take hold on the promises of God, still, true faith, while it may differ much in the degree in which it is exercised, is in all real believers essentially the same. We believe the above description to contain, in substance, the experience of the children of God in every age and every clime. Thus are they carried on "from faith to faith" by the powerful operation of his Spirit; and beholding the Image of God in the person of Jesus Christ, they pursue the heavenly road from "glory to glory;" and though they sustain many a conflict with the remaining corruption of their own nature, the deceitfulness of the world, and the devices of Satan; and, struggling in this conflict, often, with the Apostle, are compelled to "groan, being burthened," yet do they find that "greater

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(1) 1 John ii. 15. (2) 1 John ii. 15. (3) 1 John ii. 15.

is he that is for them than he that is against them"—yet, from time to time, through faith in that mighty Conqueror, do they experience a glorious deliverance; and at last, made "more than conquerors" through "Him that loved them," they fall asleep in peaceful dependence on that beloved and Divine Character, to resemble whom in a perfect and sinless image, had been, in this world, the unfailing desire of their souls.

Of the individuals whose religious experience we have attempted briefly to recount, those who were first awakened to the reality and importance of these truths enjoyed, for a time, the opportunity of hearing the gospel proclaimed in the Church of England; and, when at length circumstances which they could not control, deprived them of a blessing so essential to the welfare of their souls, they could not withstand the necessity of seeking it elsewhere. They could not give their sanction, however insignificant, to doctrines which they conscientiously believed to be subversive of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—nor "bid God speed" to those who, however estimable in other respects, in their view, continued in that carnal state which is enmity against God, and naturally opposed to the only way whereby sinners can be saved. In this state of mind they were led to seek that food which the simple truth of God's Word is alone able to bestow, in the small Baptist Church which had been for a number of years established in Halifax.

The human mind in a state of quiet can form but a very inadequate conception of what will be its feelings when assailed by unknown temptation. Our readers may, therefore, not be prepared to learn that any degree of mental trial accompanied the step we are now relating. It was not, however, void of difficulty. A stated attendance on a Baptist ministration for religious instruction was a measure calculated to attract observation and censure; and our friends were, perhaps, for the first time in any forcible degree, awakened to a sense of the very small amount of public favour which this denomination enjoyed, especially in Halifax, and to perceive that they were regarded as occupying the lowest rank in religious estimation —were in fact despised as an ignorant and deluded sect. The incontrovertible evidence, however, which had been afforded to our religious friends, of the piety, good sense, and sound scriptural information, of several teachers of this persuasion, counterbalanced the prejudice which they had imbibed, in common with the public, and they soon came to be struck with the unaffected scriptural sim-

plicity which pervaded the whole system of worship adopted by this denomination, and which forcibly brought to view, as it were, the humble companies of Jewish shepherds, or Galilean fishermen, who, in accordance with the Scripture narrative, may be supposed to have poured forth their artless but heartfelt devotion in the days immediately succeeding the time when the King of Heaven stood in human form upon the earth. Every sentiment of degradation, if such had at any time been perceived, in associating with these humble and despised followers of the Lamb, was soon obliterated, and was succeeded by a sweet tranquillity that seemed naturally to belong to a situation so remote from the glare and pomp of the world.

Here they had opportunities of hearing several of the teachers of this denomination, from whose lips they received a plain but forcible declaration of the truth, as it is in Jesus; and, it is but due to the modesty and liberality of these good men, to take this opportunity of entirely exonerating them from any charge of proselytism so frequently alleged against religious denominations. They appeared too deeply engaged in the sublime employment of preaching "Christ and him crucified," to descend to the less essential, though not unnecessary investigation of the scripture doctrine of baptism. The acquaintance thus formed had, however, a natural effect, without controversy on the subject, to lead the minds of our religious friends to an inquiry into the distinguishing peculiarity of the Baptist denomination. They knew, however, the necessity of resorting to the Scriptures as the only unerring guide. Human authority was of ever varying complexion—an inextricable maze of almost immeasurable extent; exhibiting a range that spread from the extravagancies of the wildest enthusiasm, on the one side—through all the absurdities of the grossest superstition—all the perplexities of scholastic ingenuity—until it reached the very verge of atheistical indifference on the other. On the Bible, they knew, the reformers had taken their strong and only impregnable position; and here these inquirers were convinced, and here only, was satisfactory evidence to be gathered, on any point of faith or practice.

These persons were sincere members of the Church of England. The earliest recollections of their infant years, the respectable antiquity of that church, the history of the brilliant piety which has so often adorned her members, and the nature of their whole religious connections—all had combined to attach them to her impos-

ing form of worship with an affection of no ordinary strength. A liberal mind will readily believe that sentiments thus generated, interwoven with the strongest ties of social love, and possessing so much to heighten and confirm them, are not to be abandoned without many a painful struggle; and the individuals now alluded to, experienced this mental conflict in all its force. In the course of their investigation, suspicions of the unsoundness of the system to which they were so warmly attached, flashed, from time to time, upon their minds, and it was with no common anxiety that they prospectively, as it were, beheld the destruction of the many soothing prejudices on this subject, which were nurtured in them by early education, and confirmed by the habits of riper years. At times indeed, the influence of those prejudices would resume its force and quiet their apprehensions. But this state of mind could not continue. When once a serious doubt has assailed received opinions, and an inquiry into religious truth has begun to be awakened, it is not easy, in such a case, to satisfy a sincere conscience without a full investigation.

A consideration, however, which first engaged their attention, was one with respect to which the sentiments of the Baptist denomination are not peculiar, being the same mainly as are held in common with them by a very numerous and respectable body of Protestants. This was the question of Church Discipline and Government.

These persons found that they had never, until now, sought to entertain a specific understanding of the nature of a Christian Church. The Scriptures, when examined on this subject, represent the Church as a society of real and practical believers associated for the worship and service of God in the use of his appointed ordinances, and carefully excluding from their communion those whose conduct should dishonor, or whose doctrines might endanger their faith. In the sacred page they found themselves commanded to "withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly;"(1) to turn away from such as have "a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof," (2) and not to "bid God speed" to those who "bring not this doctrine" of Christ; (3) while at the same time it was distinctly apparent that these precepts pointed at the discipline of the church, and not ordinary intercourse with the world.(4) They felt that

(1) 2 Thess. iii. 6. (2) 2 Tim. iii. 5. (3) 2 John x. (4) 1 Cor. v. 10.

with these plain scriptural directions they could not remain in church communion with such as virtually denied the gospel, nor by their countenance continue to sanction the error and swell the influence of those who, while they deny the necessity of regeneration by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and the important doctrine of justification by faith alone, subvert the foundation of a sinner's hope, and destroy the only pure fountain of acceptable obedience. Immoral conduct in nominal christians may ruin their own souls, and spread the baneful savour of evil example; but perverted and corrupt doctrine saps the vitals of true religion, and as it were intercepts and cuts off, as far as mortal arm can do it, the only way of communication between a lost world and an Almighty Saviour.

The sentiment now entertained by our friends on the subject of Church Discipline may be well illustrated by the following passage from the celebrated Hooker:—"There are wicked whom the Church may judge, and there are wicked whom God judgeth; wicked within and wicked without the walls of the Church. If within the Church, particular persons be apparently such as cannot otherwise be reformed, the rule of the apostolical judgment is this, separate them from among you; if whole assemblies, thus, separate yourselves from among them; for what society hath light with darkness."(1) To those who deny the spiritual and tranforming life of that religion which we desire to honor by these humble pages, the justification here offered for separation from the Church of England, may seem insufficient; but from those whose hearts rejoice in its power, we do claim, with some confidence, christian forbearance, if not entire acquiescence. To their candor we appeal, when we assert the utter destitution of all Church Discipline in the Establishment, as a body; when we assert, that if it were possible to exert discipline when the great majority of its members are wholly opposed to its exercise, and to the principles that require it, it must necessarily result in the exclusion of that majority, or, as Hooker contemplates, in the separation of the few.

The mind, long habituated to idolize, in religion as in all other things, those usages and opinions which the lapse of ages has clothed with a sort of sanctity, may shrink with an involuntary terror from this thought: and the alarmed imagination may paint to itself a fearful vision of the threatened ruin. And yet the

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(1) Sermon on Justification.

principle was readily admitted when the necessity of carrying it into effect was deemed at a distance; and in fact the exercise of the principle has, in a limited measure, been repeatedly exemplified. It is not in Halifax first that the necessity of separation from the world, of discipline in the Church, of setting Zion as a city on a hill, that her light might not be hid, has compelled the disciples of the cross, with painful effort, to tear away from the prejudices of education and hereditary religion, and establish themselves alone as a church of Jesus Christ. Many in the earlier ages, perhaps, whose real history lies enveloped in the darkness of antiquity, thus stood aloof from the torrent of prevailing error and irreligion, and left their names to be transmitted to posterity, through the distorting representations of their opponents, as schismatics and heretics. The vallies of Piedmont long afforded a frail shelter to such separatists from Romish errors. And if *their* history, too, is clouded by the obscurity of time, at least the sixteenth century saw the seeds of Reformation which had long been preparing through the labors of a Wickliffe, a Jerome, or a Huss, burst forth with a splendor and a power which we trust no lapse of ages shall ever utterly obscure. But as, in the days of the Apostles themselves, error and confusion stalked boldly among the churches of Christ, so, in the very morning of the Reformation, the enemy of souls possessed the power of destroying many a promising flower in the bud. With what pain did Luther, Calvin, and other worthies, struggle to the attainment of the light they gained! Is it unreasonable, then, to suppose that there yet remained things to be understood, which, with the mighty aid of what their labors had effected, succeeding Christians, although vastly inferior to those great originals, might yet attain? Doubtless such has been the case; and that is a bigotted view of the subject which would regard any doctrine or practice inviolable, merely because thus the Reformers held But the tyranny which hereditary religion often will exercise over the mind is, perhaps, fully known only by those who have escaped from its bondage: and this may account for the fact, that really good men, eminent for evangelical religion, have been, in many particulars, hemmed in and restricted in the exercise of gospel liberty. Such men have been seen in the national church who trembled at the prospect of the free enjoyment of Christian privileges, because they observed that there was danger of their abuse, and they wielded no arm of discipline strong enough to check it. Other churches, whose

internal discipline in other respects they would gladly have imitated, had long been free to obey the Apostolic precept that men should be ready always to pray, "every where lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting;" and in the exercise of their privilege had often enjoyed a rich blessing in the increase of humility, of spirituality, and of numbers; and yet these good men, seeing not how to guard against the admission of extravagance and misguided enthusiasm, have almost resolved to abandon the privilege.

In like manner, while the prayers of all true Christians fervently seek the powerful presence of God, in the increase of the kingdom of Jesus Christ; there have been among them those, who were unprepared to receive the answer to their petitions; and who, when an abundant measure of grace has been poured out into the hearts of the people, have felt an unreasonable alarm at the exhibition of that work taking place in many souls at once, which they would rejoice to see in individuals; and this, also, because their minds had been fettered by the prejudices of early education; and perhaps, because they have felt *their* churches to be destitute of that power of gospel order, which would guard against a perversion of the grace of God.

But we return to the progress of religious illumination as experienced by the subjects of this history. The question which next pressed itself upon their attention was that of Baptism. Nursed, as they had been, in unsuspecting confidence, that in so important a point as this, their mother Church could not be guilty of a mistake, it was with no inconsiderable surprise that they searched the Scriptures in vain for authority for the practice of sprinkling infants; that in the accounts given of the administration of the ordinance, they found them uniformly connecting with the reception of Baptism, faith, or some other exercise of the mind of a conscious moral agent that necessarily implies believing.

As an act of personal obedience to a divine command, and such the Scriptures represent Baptism to be, they could not but feel that it seemed fairly to claim a capability for obedience in the recipient of the ordinance. When they contemplated its objects and uses, there seemed a singular propriety in a believer, by this public act making "a good profession before many witnesses." And in the manner of it by immersion, there appeared to shine forth a beautiful significancy, emblematical of "the death unto sin," and "new

birth unto righteousness" experienced by all true believers in Christ. (1)

The covenant of circumcision seemed to be the strong hold to which some of the advocates of Pedobaptism, when driven from all direct evidence, endeavor to make good their retreat, although many among themselves rejected this method; and indeed the great discrepancy among the supporters of that system, in their way of maintaining it, seemed no small indication of its weakness. In vain, however, was any just argument attempted to be drawn from this source. It involved monstrous consequences. An analogy endeavored to be made between the two rites of Circumcision and Baptism *must* fail in almost every particular. As well might any other ceremony of the Mosaic Ritual be adopted into the practice of a Christian church. The worshippers of God are spiritual worshippers; and such only are suitable members of his church, as is well stated in the nineteenth Article of the Church of England: but infant Baptism, founded on the covenant of circumcision, strikes at the very root of the spirituality of Christ's kingdom, and ingrafts at once a nation into the church, without the smallest regard to religious qualifications.

On referring to the testimony respecting early practice, historical records were found to contain no mention of infant Baptism for a considerable period after the Apostles; which silence gave no small evidence that the practice had not then crept in; while at the same time the first notice of it was scanty, vague, and imperfect, and, on the whole, more favorable to believers' Baptism than to that of infants; and it was easy to perceive that in two centuries, upwards of which period had elapsed before the latter practice is found in general use, there was abundant time for the corruption of primitive usage in this particular, and accordingly the Christian world is found at that time to teem with errors both of doctrine and practice.

It may be well, however, here to notice that the most ample testimony is derived from the writings of the Fathers, that immersion was the primitive mode of Baptism. This, together with the primary meaning of the Greek word rendered "Baptize," which is undoubtedly to "immerse;" and the direct testimony of

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(1) 1 Pet. ii. 24. Rom. vi. 2, 8, 11.

a great majority of the most learned Pedobaptists, (1) both as to the meaning of the word, and as to the primitive practice, leaves it a matter of some surprise that, in the present day of light and knowledge, candor should not silence any further dispute as to those particulars. In the absence, then, of all adequate evidence or argument in favor of the practice, the example of Christ himself, as well as that presented by every instance of Baptism recorded in the New Testament, together with the various passages which represent faith as a prerequisite to its reception, remained the only source, at last, as it was indeed the only genuine source in the first instance, to which these inquirers could resort for instruction as to the nature of Christian Baptism.

After long and serious examination, united with earnest prayer, and, it must be confessed, not without much pain at the prospect of being compelled to differ from many beloved and highly esteemed followers of Jesus, and to wound the feelings of many of their relations and friends, this inquiry resulted in a belief that the immersion of those who profess faith in Jesus Christ, according to the pattern exhibited in the instance of Philip and the Eunuch,(2) is the only Baptism enjoined by Jesus Christ or practised by his Apostles.

In the quiet retirement which our friends now enjoyed in their religious worship, and with the unaffected simplicity of that ministration of the gospel of which they were partakers, they had probably remained contented to this day, had they limited their views solely to their own spiritual edification. But it is a characteristic of the religion of Jesus Christ, that it awakens in the soul a principle of benevolent concern for the everlasting welfare of our fellow-men. Of this, surely, no doubt can be entertained when the character of the Saviour is contemplated. He went about doing good, and preaching "the gospel of the grace of God." He mourned over the impenitence of sinners, and thus exemplified in himself the spirit of that solemn asseveration and pathetic remonstrance of the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of the Prophet, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die, O house of Israel?"(3) If, then, the same

(1) Such as Luther, Beza, Calvin, Salmasius, Casaubon, Venema, Dr. Wall, in his History of Infant Baptism, Dr. Hammond, Bishop Taylor, Dr. Doddridge, Dr. Campbell, and many others.

(2) Acts viii. 26—40. (3) Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

mind was in any measure possessed by these individuals, "which was also in Christ Jesus," could they altogether fail in their resembance to their divine Master in this particular? Could they have been made partakers of his grace, and not ardently desire that others should participate with them in that inestimable treasure? Could they have "freely received" without being solicitous also freely to bestow? Could they, in short, see many of their relations, their friends, their countrymen, "perishing for lack of knowledge," and not hold themselves in readiness to seize every providential means of giving them access to those truths, which, in their own case, they had found "able to save their souls?"

This language may, perhaps, to some appear to contain too bold a censure of all whose sentiments in religion differ from those here attempted to be described; and, if the difference merely rested on some of those minor points which distinguish the various denominations into which Christians are separated, such language were utterly inexcusable: but the ground on which we desire to stand is that of real, heartfelt religion. Here true charity demands the plainest speech; and if, therefore, in any part of this short memoir we find ourselves constrained to use language consistent with our own sentiments, and those of the individuals of whom we write; we now, once for all, beg to assure our friends and brethren of every denomination, and of whatever religious sentiments, that we intend no disrespect, and are influenced by no unkindly feelings, but are compelled by our view of the nature of true religion, to employ that form of expression which accords with our belief. We are heartily willing to be tried by the word of God; and sincerely should we rejoice in having received a correct understanding of the Sacred Volume, should it prove the means of leading any to search the Scriptures, to see if these things are so.

But to continue our narrative. An affectionate solicitude for their friends and neighbors had often filled the souls of these Christians, and it is believed frequently carried them to the footstool of that throne, where the voice of supplication is not poured forth in vain. The small Baptist meeting which they then frequented, afforded no accommodation equal to that proportion of the population of this town that appeared willing to listen to the word of God; still less to the number of those to whom our friends wished that word might find access. Their ardent desire was that the same message of mercy, which, they trusted, had been applied with

some power to their own souls, might not be limited to themselves. Early in the spring of 1827, therefore, the commodious building now occupied by the Church in Granville-street was purchased. The engrossing object in their view at that time, was simply to establish in it the stated preaching of "the word of life." The denomination to which the preacher might belong appeared unimportant, provided he had indeed experienced in his own soul the efficacy of the truth he should teach.

In the course of the summer, however, several of the individuals whose progress we are tracing, arrived at so satisfactory a conviction of the necessity of Baptism by immersion, on a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, as a duty resting on the command of our Saviour, that they became earnestly solicitous that the Chapel should be completed, and that its opening might be accompanied with their admission into it, as a church of baptized believers in Christ, and thus advantage be taken of this opportunity to "let their light shine before men," to the glory of God the Father.

But the same concern for the spiritual welfare of their fellow-sinners which had influenced these friends in the purchase of the Chapel, soon brought to their notice another serious consideration. This was the general character, in point of information and understanding, of the congregation which it might be hoped would, from time to time, attend this place of worship; and the necessity of adapting, as far as was consistent with "the truth of God," the ministration that should be sought, so as to meet the state and character of this congregation. They had indeed witnessed the grace of God manifested in raising up useful and acceptable teachers, who had borrowed little aid from those sources of erudition on which the wisdom of man lavishes so profound a veneration; and had seen that in this manner it often pleases the great Head of the Church to testify his own sovereignty. But they also recollected that God had not omitted to inculcate the exercise of wisdom in its utmost extent. They were therefore led to perceive that their duty required them to mingle the utmost prudence, as men, with entire submission to the divine will and guidance, as Christians, and thus to attempt the selection of a minister for their Chapel whose attainments, in every point of view, might be adapted to the character and habits of the people whom he would have to address; and the means of what is generally termed a liberal education, within the compass of Baptist ministers in this country, being

very limited, they judged it proper to look abroad for a supply; and, consequently, sought a correspondence on this subject both in England and the United States.

Disappointment, however, seemed for a time about to be their portion. Their correspondence had been eagerly pursued in the quarters to which it had been directed, but it had been unsuccessful. They indeed found friends most kindly disposed to lend them every aid, but so great is the demand, especially in the United States, for ministerial exertions, that a dark cloud seemed to hang over the prospect of supplying the Granville-street Chapel.

But He who "leads the blind by a way which they have not known," was preparing a happy dawn to illuminate the darkened hopes of these friends of Zion; and providing, temporarily at least, such pastoral help as they sought, and such as they trust may become a means of salvation to many souls in Halifax.

In this stage of our narrative, it may not be improper, in reference especially to such of our readers as may have a particular knowledge of the parties interested in it, to take a parting notice of the mistakes and disappointments in estimating religious character which have accompanied them during various periods of their progress. Tenderness to private feelings has forbidden a particular mention of these. But without venturing to pass a judgment on any individual, we would wish to remark that such mistakes and disappointments can furnish no fair argument against the doctrines here held as the truth of God, but, if of any force, may tend rather to confirm them. At all periods of the history of the Church, there have been those who have, for a time, seemed to run well, but whom, at length, sin, and Satan, and the world, prevailed "to hinder that they should not obey the truth." At all periods has some seed fallen on stony ground; and there consequently have been those, who "anon with joy received the word," but who, "when persecution arose, by and by were offended." The Saviour himself was often surrounded by men, who, for a time, appeared zealous followers; but when brought up to the plain truth of God's word, deemed it "a hard saying," and thenceforth, walked no more with him. The great Apostle of the Gentiles also was tried by "perils among false brethren;" was called to mourn the defection of a Demas, who, though once high in the estimation even of the discerning Paul, as a fellow laborer in the Gospel, at length forsook him, "having loved this present world;" and to en-

dure the malignity of others who "preached Christ out of contention, supposing to add affliction to his bonds."

The melancholy recurrence of similar instances at the present day, much as they are to be deplored, tend nevertheless to the confirmation of the truth, when it is seen to be accompanied with the same striking and peculiar circumstances that characterized it in the very first rise of the Church. And if the individuals interested in this narrative have in any measure been subjected to the like trials, let not their jealousy for the truth pass unnoticed, nor unobserved the impartiality with which, at whatever sacrifice of their personal feelings, they have endeavored to clear themselves from the charge of sanctioning any aberration from rectitude, or covering any hollow or insincere profession.

To one other additional remark we crave indulgence in this place. The preceding statements of religious doctrine and experience, necessarily, in our judgments, involve that truth so hostile to the unrenewed heart, so often abused by unworthy professors of Christianity, and yet so effectual in producing holiness, so abounding in consolation to the humble disciple of the cross,—the electing love or distinguishing grace of God. And while in the declaration of "all the counsel of God" we should desire to see this doctrine, as well as all others, hold only that relation and that degree of prominency in the general picture, which it is found to occupy on a just examination of the Sacred Records, we at the same time, on the one hand, see it to contain the only power which can cleave asunder the sinner's hold on self-dependence, that quicksand where ruin certainly awaits him; on the other, we discover in it the glorious foundation on which alone has ever been built the assured confidence, the joyful hope, of saints and martyrs. Here is that anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail.(1) Here are the "two immutable things," the promise and oath of God, whereby they "might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them."(2) Here, to a sinner who has learned his own natural weakness and depravity, is the only pledge of hope, that amidst the trials and temptations of his future life—amidst the snares of the world, the deceitfulness of sin, the malignant power of the "roaring lion," he shall finally be made "more than a con-

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(1) Heb. vi. 19. (2) Heb. vi. 18.

queror" over all these "through him that loved him." He is "the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus *unto good works, which God hath before ordained that he should walk in them.*"(1) His confidence is in him who is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." And when enjoying an humble assurance that he has indeed been enabled to take refuge in Christ, he is able to join with the Apostle in his eloquent and sublime climax, and say, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified:"(2) and with the Apostle, too, he joyfully unites in crying, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"(3)

We cannot but commiserate the case of those tempted souls, that fear the eternal counsel and purpose of God to be a bar to their approach to Christ; deeming, as we do, the want of a cordial assent to the Divine will to be the only bar. We would fain ask them, helpless, and sinful, and corrupt, as they have found themselves to be, whether their salvation would appear safer in their own hands than in those of the everlasting Jehovah? Would it afford them more comfort to resort to some hidden, unknown, imaginary resource in themselves, than to approach the Most High God, and commit their cause to him? Or can they conceive the supposed ability of their own hearts to will their own regeneration a better foundation for the hope of heaven, a greater encouragement to them in their pursuit of eternal life, than the invitation of the benevolent Saviour, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,"(4) and "him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out?"(5)

Having now conducted our readers through the first part of this sketch, and exhibited to them a brief view of the somewhat remarkable progress, which a number of persons, without any premeditated plan, were led gradually to make, in the investigation of truth, and towards the establishment among them of the stated

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(1) Eph. ii. 10. (2) Rom. viii. 28, 29, 30. (3) Rom. viii. 31.
(4) Matt. xi. 28. (5) John vi. 37.

preaching of the pure "gospel of the grace of God;" we introduce them with pleasure to the second part of this Memoir, where will be found a statement of the interesting facts more directly connected with the formation of the Church in Granville-street.

PART II.

Arrival of Professor Chase—The first Baptism—Dedication of the Chapel, and Recognition of the Church—Articles—Covenant—Ordination of the Rev. A. Caswell—of two Deacons—Second Baptism, and the Lord's Supper—Conclusion.

On Thursday, the 27th of September, the Rev. Irah Chase, Professor of Biblical Theology in the Newton Theological Institution, near Boston, (Mass.) arrived at Halifax, with a friend who will hereafter be more particularly mentioned. They were cordially received; and they entered immediately on the work of promoting the spiritual interests of the people, and of taking the requisite steps previous to the anticipated Baptism, and the constitution of a Church. Six believers who had not truly been baptized, were in readiness before the Lord's-day; and much attention was excited in expectation of their baptism.

THE BAPTISM.

The place selected for the administration of the ordinance, was a quiet and delightful spot on that inlet of the sea above Halifax called Bedford Basin. A convenient house was near; and the proprietor kindly opened it for the accommodation of the candidates and others.

The Lord's-day morning came. The weather was fine, and a large assembly stood on the bank. Professor Chase addressed them thus:

You are aware, my friends, of the purpose for which we are here assembled. We have come to obey one of the commands of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Your countenances tell me that you have not come hither to interrupt nor to mock. I rejoice in

the confidence that you have come to listen, and to behold with respectful attention. I need not detain you with preliminary remarks. Let us, with becoming reverence, enter upon the devotional services that are before us.

HYMN 314, C. M. *(Winchell's Selection.)*

How great, how solemn is the work
  Which we attend to-day!
Now for a holy, solemn frame,
  O God, to thee we pray.

O may we feel as once we felt,
  When mourning, grieved, and faint,
Thy kind, forgiving, melting look,
  Relieved our sad complaint.

Awake, our love, our fear, our hope,
  Wake, fortitude and joy;
Vain world, begone; let things above
  Our happy thoughts employ.

Whilst thee, our Saviour and our God,
  To all around we own,
Drive each rebellious, rival lust,
  Each traitor from the throne.

Instruct our minds, our wills subdue,
  To heaven our passions raise,
That hence our lives, our all may be
  Devoted to thy praise.

After the singing of this hymn, a prayer adapted to the occasion was offered. A solemn impression seemed to be on the minds of all; and the heart-felt Amen was responded by many at the close. The administrator then addressed a few words to the assembly:

On this occasion, my respected hearers, it may be supposed that I should vindicate the ordinance we have come to observe. But there is a subject which ought to be previously settled. When I cast my eye over this multitude, my mind is borne onward to that day, when, amidst the innumerable multitude of all nations, we shall meet before the bar of God. I fear, I greatly fear, that many of you are unprepared for that meeting. O let me speak freely to

your consciences. Are you prepared to meet your God? Have you repented of your sins? Have you, with all the heart, believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and become his willing and devoted disciples, each saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

If you are not thus prepared, you are not prepared to enter profitably upon the discussion of the subject of Baptism. You are neglecting a previous subject, a subject of overwhelming importance. Your souls are in danger of everlasting perdition. And God forbid that I, or any of my brethren, should call away your attention from your first and immediate duty to any controversy respecting any external rite or observance which Christ has enjoined on his disciples. Let me entreat you in the fear and love of God, to settle the previous subject,—to become in heart and in deed disciples of Christ. Then you will be better prepared than you can be at present to consider the subject of Baptism; and then, while your bosoms are glowing with gratitude to him who loved us, and died for us, I would refer you for information concerning Baptism, and most confidently I would refer you, to the Holy Scriptures. Let them lead you; let them, with the love of God shed abroad in the heart, be your guide.

To you, my dear fellow disciples, who are about to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, it becomes me to address a few words. I have spoken of the Holy Scriptures as our guide. Let me now call your attention to one passage. From the many that occur in that blessed volume, let me select a lesson for your present meditation:—

Rom. vi. 1—13.

1. *What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin that grace*
2. *may abound? God forbid: How shall we that are dead to sin*
3. *live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?*

"Baptized into his death"—We, by our baptism, the Apostle would say to his Roman brethren, we, by our baptism, have expressed our view of the death of Christ, and the effect which that view has had on ourselves. We have viewed him dying for sin; and that view has made us dead to sin. "Our old man," our sinful propensities, have been slain: they have been, as it were, crucified with Christ. We have known and felt that we ought to be as

insensible to the allurements of sin as if we were really dead, and were become so many corpses ready to be laid in the grave. At the same time, we have, as we humbly trust, become alive to holiness.

We have then experienced a death, a deadness to sin, as Christ died to deliver from sin. And we have been made alive to holiness, by the divine Spirit, and been disposed to begin a new and never-ending life to God, as Christ rose from the dead.

By being "baptized into Jesus Christ," or as his disciples, the Apostle would say that we solemnly and most impressively intimated the death of Christ, and our deadness to sin; the resurrection of Christ, and our rising to a new life. As dead to sin we were buried by baptism; and as alive to holiness and to God, we rose again from the watery grave.

4. *Therefore we are buried with him, by baptism, into death, that,*
like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the
5. *Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if*
we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we
shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

In other words, if we have been made similar to him, or have been associated with him in the likeness of his death; if, in view of his death, we have come so to sympathize with him as to be dead to sin, we shall be associated with him also in the likeness of his resurrection. We shall be quickened and raised up as it were from the dead; we shall become alive to God; we shall enter on a new life, a life of holiness, a life that shall never end.

6. *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the*
body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not
7. *serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we*
8. *be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:*
9. *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more;*
10. *death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he*
died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.
11. *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin,*
12. *but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not*
sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey
13. *it in the lusts thereof: Neither yield ye your members as in-*
struments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves un-
to God as those that are alive from the dead, and your mem-
bers as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Dear brethren and sisters in Christ! you see the obligations that rest on the baptized. And, blessed be God, you do not wish them to be lighter nor weaker. If you have found the burden of sin to be intolerable, and if Christ has given you rest, you will find that his yoke is easy, and his burden is light. Think of the floods of sufferings that rolled over his righteous soul. Think of his death; think of his grave; think of his resurrection. And never, never forget that being "buried by baptism," and raised up as from the grave, you will be specially obligated henceforth to lead a new and holy life.

Think of the power of the Saviour who rose from the dead. He had power to lay down his life, and he had power to take it again. All power in heaven and in earth belongs to him. To him then commit yourselves without reserve. Obey his voice. Trust his grace. Here, in his strength, resolve anew to strive against every sinful propensity, till you pass through the waters of death; for he is "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy."

The candidates, after this address, were led successively down into the water, and baptized.

Silence and decorum pervaded the assembly, and some were affected to tears. In some of the intervals occupied in coming up out of the water, and in descending, a verse of an appropriate hymn was sung upon the shore. Then all was stillness, but the voice of the administrator, and the gentle moving of the water. The services were closed with a very brief and pertinent prayer, and a benediction.

DEDICATION OF THE CHAPEL, AND RECOGNITION OF THE CHURCH.

In the afternoon, the stone Chapel was opened the first time for public worship; and appropriate praises and prayers were offered to God. Prof. Chase then read the articles of belief and covenant,(1) which had been adopted by the newly constituted Church as follows:

As God has been pleased to put it into the hearts of a number of persons to complete in this place a new house for his worship, and

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(1) The same in substance with those of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association, but preferred for ordinary use, as being more brief and simple.

the work having thus far been accomplished in circumstances peculiarly interesting, and with evident tokens of the smiles of the great Head of the Church, we feel it an incumbent duty, with a view to the glory of the rich grace of our Lord and Saviour, which we trust we have experienced, and to the extension of his kingdom among men, to associate and covenant together in the bonds of fellowship as members of a church of Christ; and knowing that, as "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," so "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," and that it may be useful and gratifying to others to be correctly informed concerning our belief, we deem it suitable to make the following declaration of

Our Views of Christian Doctrine.

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired; that it is a perfect rule of faith and practice; and that, among others, it teaches the following important truths:

I. That there is one only living and true God, infinite in every natural and moral excellence.

II. That he has revealed himself as the Father, and the Son, (or the Word,) and the Holy Ghost, the same in essence and equal in divine qualities.

III. That man was created holy; but that by wilfully violating the law of his Maker, he fell from that state; so that by nature there is in us no holiness; but we are all inclined to evil, and, "in that all have sinned," all are children of wrath, justly exposed to death, and other miseries temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

IV. That the only way of salvation from this state of guilt and condemnation is through the righteousness and atonement of Jesus Christ, the Word, who miraculously assumed our nature without sin, or became incarnate, for the suffering of death, and "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood;" having "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."

V. That all who are brought to repentance and faith, were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; and that, in consequence, not of their own merit, but of God's own purpose and grace, the Holy Ghost, (without whose influence none would ever repent and believe,) performs the work of regeneration in their hearts.

VI. That nothing can separate true believers from the love of God, but they will be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," the sure and final proof of their being true believers, consisting in the continuance of their attachment and obedience to Christ till the close of life.

VII. That the only proper subjects of the ordinance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are professed believers; and that baptism is properly administered only by immersion, and is, by scriptural example, a pre-requisite to communion at the Lord's table.

VIII. That according to the example of the Apostles, and earliest disciples, sanctioned by the repeated presence of Christ himself, after his resurrection, the first day of the week is to be observed as the Lord's-day, or Christian Sabbath.

IX. That there will be a resurrection of the just and the unjust, and that the Lord Jesus Christ will come to judge both the living and the dead; when those who have continued or died impenitent and unreconciled to God, will be sentenced to endless punishment, according to the desert of their sins; and those who have truly repented and turned to God, relying solely on the merits of him who died, the just for the unjust, will be completely delivered from the dominion of sin, and be admitted into the holy and heavenly Jerusalem with songs and everlasting joy: so shall they be ever with the Lord.

Church Covenant.

As we trust that we have been brought by divine grace to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the influences of his Spirit to give ourselves up to him, so we do now solemnly covenant with each other, as God shall enable us, to walk together in brotherly love; that we will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully admonish and entreat one another, as occasion may require; that we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect the great duty of prayer for ourselves and for others, that we will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and, by a pure and lovely example, to win our kindred and acquaintances to the Saviour, to holiness, and to eternal life; that we will participate in each other's joys, and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows; that we will seek divine aid to enable us to live circumspectly and watchfully in the world, "denying ungodliness and

worldly lusts," and remembering that, as we have voluntarily been buried by baptism, and have been raised up from the emblematical grave, so there is on us a special obligation henceforth to lead a new and holy life; that we will strive together for the support of a faithful, evangelical ministry among us; and, through life, amidst evil report and good report, seek to live to the glory of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.

After the reading of this paper, he proceeded to the public recognition of the Church, by presenting the hand of fellowship to one of the members who had been appointed to receive it for the whole, saying:

My dear Brother,—I cannot express the emotions of my heart on this occasion. It is a day of holy joy; it is a day that *the Lord hath made*.

What though till within the last week, we were foreigners and strangers to each other? The spirit of the Christian religion regards not the lines that mark off the world into separate, and, alas! too often hostile empires. And what are all the worldly interests of the mightiest empires, compared with the interests of that kingdom which is not of this world?

We will be thankful for the blessings of civil government, so richly enjoyed in our respective countries. We will pray for all that are in authority. We will render to Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and to God the things that are God's. Yes, while we are attached respectively to our countries, and cheerfully perform our respective duties to them, it is the kingdom, the spiritual kingdom of Christ of which it is our highest joy and glory to be subjects. As such we here meet each other. The events of this day prove that the members of the Church whose articles of belief and covenant we have been reading, understand the nature of a Christian Church, and desire above all things to serve and please the Lord. You would receive his doctrine and obey his commands. You would help each other forward in all that is lovely and of good report. You would show forth his praise by your own lives; and you would use the means which he has appointed for promoting his glory in the prevalance of the truth as it is in Jesus, and the salvation of souls.

There is a general bond that unites the regenerate, of whatever name, and wherever they may be discovered. And from the na-

ture of the case, there is, there must be, and ought to be; a special tie binding together those whose views of religious doctrine and duties enable them to act in closer concert.

Receive then, my brother, the hand of fellowship. It is a token, not only of christian love, but also of our christian union in maintaining the truth and the commands of our Lord. It is the pledge of the deep and thrilling interest that shall continue to be felt in the welfare of this Church. When far away from you, I shall call to mind the events of this day, my heart shall not cease to pray for the welfare of this church, and for your being a blessing to all this people. We are one; we have one Lord, one faith, one baptism. In behalf of my brethren, and of all the churches in the bosom of which my lot has been cast, I give to you most heartily, this hand of fellowship, and through you to every member of this Church, and to all the churches and ministers of the same faith and order, throughout this Province, and throughout the whole British Empire.

An appropriate discourse was then delivered, evincing the tendency of Christian principles and experience to promote, in the professors of religion, Humility with regard to God, and to one another, and to the unregenerate; and the Church was urged by every moving consideration in the present posture of its affairs to continue to cherish this amiable temper, and thus to hope for the blessing of God.

THE ORDINATION.

Professor Alexis Caswell, from the college near the city of Washington in the United States, being on a visit in Newton and Boston at the time of Professor Chase's embarking, yielded to his earnest solicitation to accompany him to Halifax. He was a licensed preacher, and he yielded to the solicitation with a view of assisting Prof. Chase, (whose health, impaired by a recent attack of fever, had not been completely restored,) and of returning soon after him to the States. But in consideration of the peculiarly interesting state of the people, and of the prospect of there being repeated calls for the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper, Prof. Chase, (to whom he had long been intimately known,) and the whole church were deeply impressed with the propriety and the importance of his being ordained to the ministry of the gospel, and of his

protracting his stay at Halifax. In this measure they had the cordial encouragement of the beloved and venerable Elder Burton, whose life has been almost worn out here in the service of the gospel. If the ordination was to occur, it was requisite to have it performed the succeeding Lord's-day.

The request was in a very impressive manner presented to Prof. Caswell, at a meeting held in the house of one of the brethren. He desired that special prayer be made in his behalf for divine direction.

A day or two after, the following note was received:

Halifax, Oct. 3, 1827.

To Prof. Chase.

Dear Sir, I have been revolving in my mind the subject which was proposed yesterday. I have endeavored to divest myself, as far as possible, of all selfish motives and feelings, and to say, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

I have not omitted to imagine myself in the presence of the Saviour, and to be asked, *What hast thou done?* I have feared to decline the invitation of the brethren, lest I should have hereafter deeply to feel that I have been unfaithful, have shrunk from the performance of obvious duty. I feel, as I have before told you, that my strength is perfect weakness; but at the same time I dare not doubt that God is able to make my weakness the instrument and occasion of infinite good. I put my trust in him.

You will make the arrangements, in concert with the brethren, for the services of Lord's-day; and God grant that his gracious presence may be with us.

I wish the subject of Deacons may not be omitted in your deliberations.

Yours sincerely, A. CASWELL.

This subject was not omitted; and two of the brethren were accordingly appointed to the office of Deacons.

The preliminary steps having been taken, the public services of the ordination were performed in the chapel, on the Lord's-day morning, the 7th of October. Prof. Chase officiated as the presiding minister. The sermon by him, from Rom. xv. 29, was adapted to impress the mind with the unutterable worth of the gospel as the richest blessing that Heaven can bestow upon a people. The impressive circumstances of the occasion were adverted to;

and the following questions solemnly propounded to the candidate. The replies were given in effect as here annexed.

In times past, my brother, you have professed to repent, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart. You have professed to renounce all dependance on your own merits, and to rely for salvation solely on the merits and atonement of Christ and him crucified. And you have professed your willingness to receive as his disciple all that he has taught, and to obey all that he has commanded.—Do you desire this day to hold fast your profession?

Ans. I desire to lay aside every weight and sin, which doth so easily beset me, and to run with patience the race that is set before me.(1)

Ques. And to look still to Christ for your salvation?

Ans. For acceptance with God I can look to no other; "for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."(2) Salvation, as I esteem it, is all of grace; "not of works, lest any man should boast."

Ques. And do you desire to give all the glory of it to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost?

Ans. I do.

Ques. Do you trust that you have been inwardly moved and constrained by the Holy Spirit, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, to enter on the ministry of the gospel?

Ans. I do.

Ques. What are some of the objects in view of which you have felt yourself thus constrained?

Ans. The object in view of which I first felt constrained to preach the gospel was the exceeding greatness of the love of God manifested in the gift of his Son to die for sinners.

When it pleased him, as I trust it did, to show me the sinfulness of my own heart, the just condemnation in which sin had involved myself and the whole human family, and the abundant riches of his grace in the new covenant, I felt an ardent desire to preach Christ and him crucified to every creature.

These ardent feelings, however, which are probably in a greater or less degree common to all christians, I did not regard as a criterion of duty. On more mature experience, and after the lapse of a few years, during which I had an opportunity to observe the

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(1) Heb. xii. 1. (2) 2 Cor. v. 21.

progress of my exercises on this subject, as well as the pointings of Providence, I felt it my duty to devote the talents which God had given me to the gospel ministry.

Other walks of life were open before me; but when I remembered the price of our redemption, the precious blood of Christ; when I looked forward to death and to a future judgment; when I saw sinners living and dying without God and without hope—the harvest plenteous, and the laborers few, I felt constrained to say, *Lord, here am I; what wilt thou have me to do?* I desire to glorify thee in my body and my spirit, which are thine, and to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

I have not been without many trials on this subject, trials which I need not now recount.

I tremble in view of the responsibilities of a minister of Christ. Consequences of eternal moment, I am convinced, hang upon his every act. And yet, awful as these responsibilities are, I cannot, without doing violence to my convictions of duty, nay, I dare not turn my back upon them.

Ques. Do you receive the Holy Scriptures as your rule of faith and practice, and as the word of God which you are to expound and enforce?

Ans. I do.

Ques. And do you receive as a summary statement of scriptural doctrine, the articles of belief which are received in this Church?

Ans. I do.

Ques. On what do you rely for strength and for success in your labours as a minister of the gospel?

Ans. I rely on the promise of Jesus Christ, after his resurrection from the dead, to his eleven disciples and to their successors in the ministerial office, *Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*

It is the cause of God, and must prevail. The entire work of producing in the hearts of men, repentance, love, faith, and every gracious exercise, is of the operation of his Spirit. But in the production of these effects, he uses means; and among them, as holding an eminent place, is the "ministry of reconciliation," which is committed unto us. This treasure we have in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. In him do I put my trust. If it shall please him to make use of one so utterly unworthy of his notice, as I feel myself to be, for the

advancement of his kingdom on the earth, to his great name will I forever ascribe the glory.

These replies having been made, the ordaining prayer was offered, with the laying on of hands, after which the ministers present gave the hand of fellowship with appropriate remarks. Prof. Chase observed :—

The solemn transactions of this day, my brother, cannot but remind you of similar services performed in the primitive church at Antioch, when Paul and Barnabas were separated to the work to which God had called them.(1) You see there a few ministers of our Lord engaged in fasting and prayer, and laying on of hands, and while they send forth their brethren, giving them the right hand of fellowship. What a faith, and what a fellowship, dear brother, must that little band of disciples have had! They stood almost alone in the world. Here and there only was to be found a Church of the Lord Jesus. They were surrounded with superstition and idolatry. Their sect was every where spoken against. They were persecuted, and driven from city to city. The powers of earth and hell, they knew would be arrayed against them. The strong holds of Satan yet remained, for the most part, in proud security. Not a single nation nor tribe could in *any* sense of the word, be called *Christian*. The whole world was sunk either in Jewish bigotry or in heathenism. And yet this little band was not appalled. They bound to their hearts the command of their ascended Lord. They relied on his promise. They moved directly forward in the prosecution of his plans of mercy. They meditated a work as great as the command of their Saviour,—the preaching of the gospel to every creature,—the watching for souls as they that must give account,—the beseeching of men to be reconciled to God,—and, in a word, the conversion of the world.

Embarking in this enterprise, so big with difficulties and dangers, they freely gave to each other the right hand of fellowship—a token of love and union—of fellowship in the Christian faith, of fellowship in the labors of the ministry, of fellowship in success, of fellowship in sufferings, and of fellowship in consolation.

By this, too, it was declared that while Paul and Barnabas were sent abroad, and others continued at home, the cause which they abored to promote was the same.

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(1) Acts xiii. 2, 3. Gal. ii. 9.

They acted their part nobly. They fell each at his post; and our religious enjoyments this day, are, under God, some of the fruits of their victories. But the conflict is not yet over. Much remains to be done. And, as we are called in Divine Providence to the places of those who have gone before us in this service, we too will give the right hand of fellowship; we too will welcome our brother to our trials, and labors, and joys.

Accept then, my brother, this right hand, the token of our Christian love, and of our confidence in you as a minister of the gospel. By this we declare our disposition to sympathize in your sorrows, and to rejoice in your joys. We welcome you to all the duties and privileges of the ministry, and to all its trials too; for trials it still has. But through Christ who strengtheneth us, we can do all things.

The hand of Providence has been signally manifest in bringing us to stand on the high and holy ground where we do now. May the hand of Providence still be our guide and support. We have toiled together at a seat of science and literature, endeared to us by a thousand tender and interesting recollections. We have toiled together in circumstances peculiarly adapted to make lasting impressions on the mind; and, thanks be to God! we have toiled together in love. Here, in the presence of this assembly and of Heaven, we renew the pledges of continued attachment. Our grand object is still the same; and while we live, let us live like brethren. What is our life! "It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." Ten years have just completed their course since the day of my own ordination. And the hand of that dear man of God,* which was then extended in behalf of all his brethren, and which clasped my own in token of fellowship, has long since mouldered into dust; and the voice which cheered me on that day, has long since been hushed in the silence of the grave. But the recollection is sweet to the soul; and it endears the hope of heaven. By the love we bear to the cause of our Lord and to the souls of men, by the shortness of our lives, by the memory of departed brethren, while we live, let us live like brethren. At the same time, let us put our hope, not in each other, but in God. And wherever, or whatever, this frail hand may be when ten more

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* Mr. Winchell, then Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Boston.

years shall have passed away, you will not be discouraged. There is an Almighty Hand that will not fail you.

After this part of the service was ended, passages from the Epistles of Paul, addressed to a junior minister of Christ were read, (1 Tim. vi. 1—14; 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25; iv. 1, 2, 5; Titus ii.; iii. 1, 2; 1 Tim. iv. 16,) and Prof. Chase proceeded in substance as follows:

"Take heed unto thyself," my brother. You are surrounded with dangers and temptations, and you can be guarded against them only by being yourself deeply imbued with the spirit of your holy calling. If you wish to have unction and energy given to your preaching; if you wish to be a good minister of Jesus Christ, aim constantly at high attainments in personal piety, and let your daily life be your most eloquent sermon.

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." See to it, in every case, that the doctrine which you preach is indeed the doctrine of the Scriptures, and that you present it in the same practical manner in which it is presented in the Scriptures.

Continue in these efforts, "for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." You will be found at last to have been faithful; and on the day of final account, you will hear the voice of our Master, "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"Thou shalt both save thyself *and them that hear thee.*" What an endearing relation, my brother, in which to stand to them that hear us! What a motive to exertion! A due impression of this will awaken and direct all your energies. It will help you in the selection of your subjects for the pulpit. It will lead you to treat them in a proper manner, and to exhibit them in a proper style. You will employ such language as shall be intelligible to the plainest individual that hears you, and as shall at the same time not offend the taste, unless it be a vitiated one, of the most literary and cultivated. Your object will be to commend the gospel of the grace of God to the consciences of all—of the poor as well as of the rich, and of the wealthy and refined as well as of the poor and unlettered. For you know that they all alike need the gospel, and that without it they all alike must perish. Now as the gospel is adapted to the wants and the woes of men of every rank and condition, so it is the signal privilege of the minister of the gospel to be a man of all ranks and of no rank. You will then pass readily and cheerfully from one class of persons to another—from the mansions of the wealthy to the

cottages of the poor; and wherever you go, you will let it be seen and felt that you watch for souls as they that must give account, and that the great object ever present to your mind is to win souls to Christ and eternal life. Thus you will, as far as possible, make your visits pastoral visits. And you will not forget the abodes of the mourning, nor the chambers of the sick and the dying. You will remember the grand commission given by our Lord: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."(1) "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."(2)

"Teach all nations:" teach all as far as possible that are capable of being taught, in whatever nation they may be found. Teach them the first lesson of Christianity, the lesson which if any one does not receive, he is not a disciple. Teach them that they are guilty before God, and utterly ruined in themselves: but that the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin. Point them to the Lamb of God as their only hope. Urge on their consciences repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And when, by the accompanying energy of the Holy Spirit, they have been effectually taught; when, penitent and contrite, they look humbly to the cross of Christ, and cordially rely on him as presented in the gospel, and are disposed to sit as disciples at his feet, and learn of him, administer baptism to them; "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Then you are to lead them onward in the Christian course, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." One of the things which our Saviour has commanded for the observance of his disciples is to commemorate his death by partaking of certain significant emblems. To such, then, as have exhibited the first profession and the divinely appointed pledge of discipleship, by being baptized according to the command of Christ, and as have "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship,"(3) you are to administer the Lord's Supper. But your work is not yet done. You are still to lead them onward, "teach-

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(1) Mark xvi. 15, 16. (2) Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. (3) Acts ii. 41, 42.

ing them to observe *all* things whatsoever I have commanded." You will lead them with correct views of religious truth, to the whole circle of Christian duties, maintaining a pure and faithful discipline in the Church of Christ, and adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."(1)

Give to every one, whether he be a believer or an unbeliever, a portion in due season. Beware of that kind of preaching which leaves a whole audience to imagine they are regenerated when they are not Address them, dear brother, though it may sometimes be painful to you, address them in such a manner as shall discriminate their respective characters, and lay open their hearts to themselves. Then, by motives drawn from the cross of Christ, and from the judgment-seat of Christ; by motives drawn not only from the terrors of the Lord, but also from the love of God in Christ Jesus, urge on every one the duties which the Apostle urged; and, standing as it were in sight of the cross of Christ, and of the judgment-seat of Christ, warn every man, and beseech every man.

Thus, my dear brother, toiling in the name and in the strength of him whose we are, and whom we serve, you will, as you have already intimated, be cheered by his voice, *Lo, I am with you alway.*

Connected with these services a hymn was sung; (247. In Watts, 119, B. I.)

CHRIST and his cross are all our theme.

After the ordination of Mr. Caswell, followed that of the Deacons. It was introduced with remarks like these:

In a Church of Christ, every member has a part to perform. Every member is to be active and useful in his place. And every one, whether male or female, may do much, and ought to do much to promote the cause of Christ.

At the same time, it is an obvious dictate of wisdom to have some particular individuals specially intrusted with the care of the Church. With this view, the Apostle Paul gave directions to Titus that Elders be ordained in every city.

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(1) 2 Tim. ii. 14, 15.

The general term *Elders*, as used in the New Testament, often included the leading men or officers of a Christian Church, whatever might be the particular term by which they were severally designated, whether Bishop, or Overseer, or Pastor, or Minister of the word, or Deacon. Thus Paul sent for the Elders of Ephesus; and he proceeded to address them as Overseers or Bishops. And thus, too, there were Elders who preached, or labored in word and doctrine; and there were Elders who did not; as when the Apostle says, "Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine."(1) From what immediately precedes this passage, it appears that the Elders who did not labor in word and doctrine were Deacons. They were associated with the Ministers of the word, as helpers in the care, and government, and service of the Church.

The same fact appears also from the account which, in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we have of the first appointment of Deacons. The Apostles were overburdened with the duties connected with the care of the Church. They sought and obtained help. They wished to give themselves to the higher and more public and difficult services; while the Deacons might aid them by attending to the more private and pecuniary affairs connected with the well-being of the Church.

From the object of their appointment, and from the character required of the men, as well as from subsequent allusions in the New Testament, it is obvious that the Deacons were to lighten the burden of the Ministers of the word by taking upon themselves, as occasion might require, the subordinate and less prominent duties connected with promoting the interests of a Church. They would of course attend to the pecuniary concerns, and see that the duty of the Church in regard to these concerns was performed. They would naturally become the counsellors of the widow, and the orphan, and the poor. Being men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, it would naturally devolve on them to help in arranging the business of the Church, and prepare it for being properly laid before the body; to assist the Pastor in adjusting difficulties that might occasionally arise; to encourage his heart and strengthen his hands in efforts to give religious instruction to the young, and especially to the poor; and, in a word, to counsel

(1) 1 Tim. v. 17.

and co-operate with him, and in their sphere be diligent and faithful servants of the Church for Christ's sake.

You perceive, my brethren, the nature of the office of Deacons; and corresponding with it is the character required. They must be "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. Likewise must the Deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. Let the Deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a Deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."(1)

Let now the men be presented whom you have appointed to this office.

One of the members of the Church then presented to the Ministers of the word the brethren who had been appointed Deacons, expressing briefly, in the name of the Church, the motives which had led to the appointment, the confidence cherished in the brethren selected, and the hope of the blessing of God upon them and upon the whole body.

Prayer was then offered; and the ministers laid their hands upon them, thus publicly designating them to their office, and fervently commending them to the grace of God.

A hymn was sung, and the services were concluded by the pronouncing of a benediction.

On the Lord's-day, Oct. 14th, Baptism was again administered. It was of the same impressive character as on the former occasion, and attended with similar circumstances. In the afternoon, eight persons, (those who were baptized in the morning, and others who had been exemplary members of a Baptist Church,) solemnly assenting, before a large assembly in the chapel, to the articles of belief and covenant, received the hand of fellowship that was presented in the name of the Church, and were affectionately welcomed to their places as members. The Lord's Supper was then administered. The congregation remained, witnessing the observ-

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(1) 1 Tim. iii. 8—13.

ance with the most respectful attention. At the close the following hymn was sung: (521. In Watts, 13, B. III.)

How sweet and awful is the place,
With Christ within the doors;
While Everlasting Love displays
The choicest of her stores!

Love mov'd the pity of our God—
Downward his chariot rolls;
Here peace and pardon bought with blood
Is food for dying souls.

While all our hearts and all our songs
Join to admire the feast,
Each of us cries, with thankful tongues,
"Lord, why was I a guest?

Why was I made to hear thy voice,
And enter while there's room,
While thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?"

'Twas the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced us in;
Else we had still refused to taste,
And perish'd in our sin.

Pity the nations, O our God!
Constrain the earth to come;
Send thy victorious word abroad,
And bring the strangers home.

We long to see thy churches full,
That all the chosen race
May, with one voice, and heart, and soul,
Sing thy redeeming grace.

When the hymn was finished, Prof. Chase uttered, from a full heart, the Apostle's most ardent desire: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.*

Having now brought to a termination our narrative of the rise and formation of the Baptist Church in Granville-street, we have only in conclusion to offer a few brief remarks.

In the preceding pages are exhibited some views respecting the external matters of religion, not universally received. These though of minor consequence when compared with the work of religion in the heart, are nevertheless derived as we conceive from the purest source of truth. They are, therefore, not unimportant. And as light dawns, on patient inquiry, they will, we trust, spread through the Christian world, until the day shall arrive when there shall be universally among all the redeemed on earth, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

But if in external matters Christians have been suffered to fall into various practices, and to arrive at different judgments, there yet remains the gratifying reflection that in the more important and vital things of salvation, they are not left to differ. Wherever the standard of the cross has been raised, in the eastern or the western world,—in the frozen regions of the north, or the parched deserts of the torrid zone,—amidst the polished and scientific circles of civilized society, or the rude and wandering tribes of untaught savages,—every where, and in all ages, have the saving doctrines of the Gospel beamed on the awakened conscience with the same hallowed and unvarying light. Simple but powerful is the truth which finds its way equally into the hearts of men of the meanest as well as the highest order of mental power.

Christ dying for the ungodly, and the fruits of that death, "Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," convey to the mind which the Holy Spirit illuminates no obscure or ambiguous idea, and in those simple expressions are contained the gospel of the grace of God.

In presenting, then, this narrative to the public we offer no new religion, but that which has received the sanction of the best and the wisest of every denomination among professing Christians. If, therefore, the preceding account of Divine truth and religious experience comes to the minds of any with the aspect of novelty, we would earnestly, as in the sight of God, and in view

of the value of their immortal souls, beseech them to examine whether the doctrines of the Bible are not still to them a novelty. We beseech them seriously to consider whether they have not hitherto been contented to pursue the easy course of the world, both in faith and practice, buried under the weight of custom, bewildered with the dreams of prejudice, and taking as their portion the perishable inheritance of earthly things.

The individuals whose experience of Divine truth has been here exhibited, stand before them as witnesses to testify with all godly sincerity, with all soberness of mind and judgment, that this experience is no fable—no wild dream—no hasty notion, rashly and inconsiderately adopted. But with all humility, and at the same time with all firmness, they declare that they speak that which they do know, and testify that which they have seen; that there is indeed a Divine and Holy Spirit, the promise of the Saviour, who still works powerfully in the hearts of believers, regenerating their souls, and leading them in the way of everlasting life. And while as faithful witnesses they affirm this truth, as affectionate friends they earnestly pray that all who hear their testimony, may, under the influence of the living God, learn experimentally the reality of this truth, and thus be brought to the knowledge and the love of Him who is "the way, and the truth, and the life."

APPENDIX.

We avail ourselves of the opportunity furnished by the unexpected delay in publishing the preceding account, to append a few remarks relative to the progress of the Granville Street Church to the present period, June, 1828. For this addition we deem no apology necessary. They who have watched over the vine in its incipient state, will rejoice to see it spreading with a healthful growth.

From the opening of our spacious chapel, large numbers, and especially on the evening of the Christian Sabbath, have attended the preaching of the gospel. The deep attention and solemnity which we have often witnessed, seem to be pledges that the messages of evangelical truth and grace will not have been delivered in vain. During the winter and spring, several persons from other Churches of the same faith and order united with us. Others who had obtained like precious faith, came forward at different times, and stated before the Church the reason of the hope that was in them, and were received as candidates for Baptism. The Lord's-day, June 1st, was appointed for the administration of the ordinance. The spot selected for the purpose was on Bedford Basin, near the place where it had before been administered. The day was cloudy, with occasional mists, but not uncomfortable. By the time appointed for the exercises to commence, notwithstanding the slight unpleasantness of the weather, a large concourse of respectable persons of both sexes had assembled at the water side to witness the ceremony. The attending circumstances—the water before us—the expanded heavens—the multitude on shore, and the vicinity of numerous boats, could scarce fail to remind one of ancient times, when the Author of our faith taught the listening multitudes on the shores of the sea of Galilee.

The Rev. Mr. Caswell, who still continues to labor among us, commenced the exercises by calling the attention of the audience

to the sacredness of the day, and of the occasion; and invited them to engage with becoming reverence in the worship of Him who "dwelleth not in temples made with hands." A hymn was then sung:—

Jesus, and shall it ever be—
A mortal man asham'd of thee!

After prayer, the congregation were addressed at some length from Matt. xxviii. 19. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The candidates, fifteen in number, were then successively led "down into the water," and "were baptized, both men and women," according to the example of the first Christians, exhibited in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

During the whole service, it was pleasing to witness, on the part of the audience, that decorum and seriousness which all considerate persons will ever bring to the solemnities of divine worship. In the afternoon, when the persons baptized were received into the Church, (whose number of members has now increased from seven to forty,) the right hand of fellowship, accompanied with a suitable address, was given by the Pastor in the presence of a numerous and deeply interested assembly.

THE SELECTION AND USE OF ACCEPTABLE WORDS.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT THE ORDINATION

OF

MR. EBENEZER THRESHER, JR.

TO THE PASTORAL CHARGE OF THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, PORTLAND.

BY DANIEL SHARP,
PASTOR OF THE THIRD BAPTIST CHURCH, BOSTON.

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SERMON.

ECCLESIASTES XII. 10.

THE PREACHER SOUGHT TO FIND OUT ACCEPTABLE WORDS.

WORDS are instruments of thought, by which we make known our sentiments and purposes to others. They are signs which enable us to communicate a knowledge of facts or to illustrate truths that may greatly affect the character and happiness of our fellow creatures. They are powerful means both of good and evil. They have a heart-withering or heart-stirring effect according to the ideas which they present to the mind. Even the hearing of a few words, or the sight of them, has often made the stout hearted tremble, or filled the bosoms of the disconsolate with transports of joy.

So deeply indeed, are the interests of society involved in the faithful and proper use of this conventional mode of intercourse, that nothing can sooner, or more effectually destroy the reputation of a person, and exclude him from all the confidence of friendship, than the knowledge, that he is habitually regardless of what he says.

If therefore it be thus important that a man should be cautious of his words in the common intercourse of life, and in his transactions with the world, how much more cautious should he be who ministers in things which relate to another world ;

> "Who negotiates between God and man
> ——— As God's ambassador—

And who is the public advocate and expounder of a revelation which purports to be from heaven ; the reception or rejection of which, will fix man's weal or woe forever. Surely, if there be any one on earth, who "should beware of lightness in his speech ;" it is he who enters on an office, so big with consequences to those that hear him.

Solomon was not only the King of Israel but a Preacher. And he especially felt the solemn responsibility attached to his ministerial character. He knew that the truths which it was his duty to teach, were of a religious nature ; and that their influence on the moral character of others, would be either good or bad. He was therefore anxious, as every preacher should be, that he might say nothing which would

pervert the judgment, or give a wrong direction to the affections or conduct of his hearers.

Although he was endued with uncommon wisdom ; and his acquirements in learning and science were profound and various ; yet, when he set himself to address his fellow men, on subjects which related to their religious faith and practice, he did not feel himself at liberty to speak without much previous reflection. " Because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge : yea he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find acceptable words."

In this passage we have an example,w hich ought to be imitated by all who preach. If he who is announced in the scriptures as the wisest man ; laboured with industry and care to find out acceptable words, even words of truth, surely preachers at the present day, who have all the disadvantages of speaking in another language, and of living at a distant age, in which the manners and habits are totally different, should take good heed to select and use such words, in all their ministrations as shall most clearly and impressively exhibit the truths which they undertake to explain and enforce.

I. It may perhaps, be proper to remark, that in performing this duty, a preacher is not required to find out words, for the purpose merely of making himself generally acceptable to his hearers.

No one ever delivered truths, that were more unacceptable to a certain class of hearers, than did the preacher. He cautioned them against worldly amusements and pleasures, with all the force of one, who had learned by bitter experience, that although full of promise, they are only vanity, and occasion vexation of spirit. He described a course of licentiousness and its consequences, in language the most condemnatory and appalling. He sought to find out words, that would be most alarming to the conscience, and terrible to the apprehension, when he pourtrayed the commencement, the progress and the end of wickedness. While he held out the brightest hopes to the righteous—he never spared the unrighteous.

Nothing would be so acceptable to many hearers, as for ministers to prophecy smooth things ; and to tell them that God makes no difference between the righteous and the wicked ; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. But however acceptable this kind of preaching would be to sinners, we are assured that it would be unacceptable to God. He has set his servants as watchmen, to warn the wicked of their danger, and to exhort them to turn from their evil ways and their doings which are not good. If the wicked turn not, they

shall perish in their transgressions, but the watchmen shall live. But if the watchman is unfaithful and does not admonish the wicked of his danger, then shall not only the wicked perish, but the loss of his soul shall be charged to the unfaithful watchman.

No preacher knew how to use acceptable words better than the Apostle Paul—and yet he says, " if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Had he consulted their passions and prejudices, had he sought to make his words acceptable to his hearers, he would have defeated the great purpose for which he was sent to preach the gospel.

II. Nor will a preacher imitate the example of the wise man, if he merely taxes his ingenuity so to combine his words and arrange his sentences as to exhibit correct and elegant composition. A preacher may delight or astonish his audience, by originality of style, and by the power and beauty of his discourses. His voice may be as a lovely song, or as one that can play skilfully on an instrument. While hearing him, you may feel the same emotions that you would, while listening to the roar of the mountain torrent or to the notes of soft, but distant music. And yet, all the while the words of the preacher, may not be in the sense of the text—acceptable words. He may be amusing his people with the mere sound and arrangement of words, while they are famishing for the bread of life.

The Apostle Paul, aware of the temptation to which even a preacher of the gospel is exposed, in relation to the delivery of his message, went to Corinth with the purpose of rising superior to it. On a review of his ministry in that rich and learned city, where oratory was so much admired, he could make an appeal that was peculiarly honorable, both to his piety and humility. 1 Cor. 2. 1—5 v. " And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. " For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. " And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. " And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power : " That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

The acceptable words which the preacher sought out, were suitable and appropriate words ; words that clearly, fully and forcibly conveyed the ideas, which were in the mind of the speaker, to the minds of those that heard him Such ought to be the desire and aim of every Public Instructer of religion.

.1 He should labour diligently and conscientiously to find out such words as will enable him distinctly and fully to convey the meaning and design of the portions of scripture which from time to time he shall attempt to expound and enforce.

As the word of God is the instrument by which men are turned from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God as it is that by which men are warned and encouraged, sanctified and comforted; it is of great moment that the preachers of this word, should exhibit it in all its just proportions. In all their arguments and illustrations it should be their object to reflect the image of divine truth, and that only. They should neither attempt to be wise above what is written, nor shrink from explaining to the best of their ability, what is plainly revealed. They should neither give defective nor exaggerated statements of the doctrines of revelation.

The acceptable words which the preacher sought to find out were words of truth. The duty of selecting such words, will appear to be of great importance, when it is considered how much the religious character of a people, as well as their consolation may be affected by it.

In dwelling on the claims which God has on his creatures, and their consequent obligations; in describing the unchangeable purposes of God on the one hand, and the free agency of man on the other; in stating what it is to be born again; and in explaining the nature of repentance towards God, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is of immense importance that the words of a preacher should convey no ideas that do not perfectly accord with the truths of revelation.

The want of a scriptural use of right words has caused men, who were dead in trespasses and in sins, to feel quieted in their consciences. They have viewed themselves as objects to be pitied and not to be blamed—and have supposed that religion was a subject in which they had no possible concern. The nature of being born again, has been so represented, that they have supposed they were regenerated, although they gave sad evidence, that they were never renewed in the spirit of their minds. And repentance and faith have been so explained that many who have exercised both, have been lead to fear that they were yet in a state of impenitence and unbelief.

To avoid the great evil of misleading the minds of their hearers; preachers should find out acceptable words. They should endeavor to understand the meaning of language in general. And especially should they consider it a sacred duty to understand the expressions of the inspired writers. By reflecting on the words of the text and their connexion; considering the design of the writer; by consulting parallel pas-

sages; by ascertaining whether the language is literal or figurative; by becoming acquainted with the history of the particular period, when the scriptures were written—its manner, customs and events—and by adopting correct principles of interpretation—they will be enabled rightly to divide the word of truth. The consequence of such careful preparation, with an humble conviction of the need of divine teaching will be; that they will address their hearers in the words of truth and soberness.

Above all things, preachers should see to it, that the word of God dwells in them richly in all knowledge and spiritual understanding. Their discourses must be enriched and adorned, not by the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.

2. In finding out acceptable words, the great object of a preacher should be, that he may use language which is best adapted to impress his people with the truths which he delivers.

If he would do this he ought to study to express himself in a simple, perspicuous and plain manner. He should not only use words which may be understood, but which cannot well be misunderstood. He should so meditate on his subject, that every word shall have its meaning.

Preachers sometimes complain that their hearers are frequently listless and inattentive. There is alas! too much reason for this complaint. But is not the fault sometimes in themselves? Is there not frequently a neglect of suitable preparation for the pulpit? The mind is vacant and unfruitful for want of previous meditation. There has not been a diligent searching to find acceptable words. And hence, there have been words indeed—but then they have been mere words—sound without sentiment.

Suppose one preacher employs twenty words to convey one idea; and another conveys the same idea in five words, you can easily conceive how much more impressive he will be. The idea which the latter has advanced will excite an interest, and be understood and felt and remembered. But the sentiment of the former is so diluted as to produce no excitement and is lost in a crowd of words.

A minister may preach the truth, and yet his language may be so diffuse, so tame and so inappropriate as to produce no effect on his audience except to lull them to sleep. How important then, that a minister should give good heed to find out appropriate words that will be impressive. Words which shall enlighten the understanding, and affect the heart—and come down with power on the conscience. The words of the wise, says the preacher, are as goads and as nails, fastened by the Masters of Assemblies. If a preacher would make his hearers

feel, he must avoid metaphysical disquisitions and abstract reasonings, and mere systematic modes of discussion, and bring religion home to the business and bosoms of men. A minister should be like an Advocate at the bar. He makes himself acquainted with the principles of legal science, the nature of evidence and the maxims of written and unwritten law. But when he appears before the court he does not constantly dwell on abstract or admitted principles of law, but applies the knowledge which he possesses in prosecuting or defending the particular case of his client. A similar course should be pursued by a preachers of the gospel. Their minds should be well stored with the truths of revelation. Not that they may always dwell on mere general abstract principles—but that they may apply their knowledge to the actual condition and character of their hearers. Their illustrations should be derived from scenes that are understood, and their appeals should be calculated to awaken the tenderest sympathies of the heart. Such instances of preaching we have, in the discourses of our blessed Lord. The parables of the barren fig-tree—the marriage supper and the prodigal son—not only taught the danger of unfruitfulness—the awful consequences of slighting the gospel—and the willingness of God to receive the returning sinner—but in a way that could not fail to fix the attention and touch the heart. If such be the character of our instruction we shall express ourselves—

"In thoughts that breathe
"And words that burn.

3. If a preacher would seek to find out acceptable words, he should make himself acquainted with his people and adapt his discourses to their peculiar state.

It is a word spoken in due season, that is pronounced by the author of our text to be good. What may be very acceptable or appropriate at one time, may be altogether the reverse at another. Had the apostle filled his first letter to the Corinthians, with remarks on the everlasting love of God to his people—or on the safety and privileges of christians, he would have written, no doubt, admirably well. But then he would not have made the Corinthians sorry. He would not have awakened in them a painful sense of their backslidings. He would not have excited that shame, and fear, and carefulness, and clearing of themselves and indignation at a recollection of their improper conduct, which his letter did produce. And why did his letter produce these effects ? Because he used right words, even words of truth. It was adapted to their case, and God blessed it to them.

He told them that they were yet carnal—that they were puffed up with pride—that their divisions were not only displeasing to God, but

injurious to the church—and that their neglect of discipline in the case of the incestuous person had already brought upon them tokens of God's disapprobation. He expressed to them his own grief and disappointment and called upon them to reform. He reminded them of the judgments of God upon ancient Israel—and exhorted such as thought they stood to take heed, lest they fall. The effects were such as might have been expected. They repented of their misdeeds. They humbled themselves before the Lord, and became a truly reformed people.

If his second letter had been like the first, he would not have healed their wounded spirits, or assuaged their griefs. But it was adapted to comfort the feeble minded and to raise up such as were bowed down. And it had unquestionably this desired effect. In like manner every preacher should suit his addresses to the state of his hearers.

If professors of religion are asleep, he must call upon them to awake, for now is their salvation nearer than when they believed. If they manifest symptoms of weariness after a season of activity, he must tell them to be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. If sinners are careless and secure, he must endeavour to alarm their fears by shewing them the folly and guilt and danger of their ways. And if they are convinced of their lost condition; he must speak a word in season to them that are weary, and bind up the broken hearted, by directing them to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.

If there are any who scoff at God's threatnings, and ridicule the doctrine of a future judgment, he must remind them of the deluge which came upon the old world ; and of the burning of Sodom and the cities of the plain. He must uncover the pit and tell the sinner to look down and see the rich man being in torments, and hear his hopeless prayer to Father Abraham—and then to look off in another direction and see the great gulf which separates hell from heaven. He must then carry the sinner forward to judgment and bid him look at the assembled nations—and hear the decisions of the Judge, saying to the righteous "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. xxv. 34. And to the wicked on his left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. xxv. 41. Thus will the words of the preacher be appropriate words ; such as the Lord will approve and bless.

4. The words of a preacher are acceptable when they indicate that he feels a proper spirit.

There are words which are unacceptable, because they indicate a wrong temper in the person who uses them. "A word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." In his most powerful remonstrances, and in his most awakening appeals, a preacher should make it manifest that he is actuated by feelings of benevolence. Solomon has left us a striking example of the affectionate manner in which the most faithful warnings may be given. Some of his most solemn cautions and severest rebukes are coupled with the language of paternal tenderness. "My Son" was a favourite expression with him, even when he was about to announce the most unwelcome truths. How calculated was this to win the attention. To conciliate the feelings and to prepare the way for the reception of what he had to communicate.

The same manner and spirit were exemplified by the prophet Jeremiah, when he reflected on the conduct of his countrymen, he exclaimed, Jer. ix. 1. "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! And especially was this tender feeling manifested by the apostle Paul. "For many walk, says he, "of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." Philip. iii. 18. He was always desirous of "Speaking the truth in love." In his conduct to the Corinthians, he expressed his sorrow that he had written. "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though *it were* but for a season." A minister should always use words which show that he feels a deep and affectionate interest in the present and eternal welfare of his hearers.

There are indeed some preachers who think they have gained an important point, if they can succeed in making their hearers angry. They then expect that some great good will be accomplished. Hence they adopt an abrupt, coarse—and half-savage kind of address. They break through all the decent forms of society and mistake rudeness for christian fidelity.

There may be here and there a person whose mind raises him just one degree above the brute creation, who can feel nothing but words like these. Yet they are not acceptable words. Where they are the means of converting one soul, they probably confirm in irreligion and wickedness one hundred.

Such a mode of address has its origin, to use the mildest terms in defective views of christianity; and in an ignorance of human nature. It is the goodness of God that leadeth us to repentance. And it is the kindness of man giving a tone and earnestness even to the voice of re-

proof and warning that finds its way most readily to the hearts of his fellows. It is what goes from the heart, that reaches to the heart. A preacher should imitate the prophets and the apostles if he would be successful. And what words did they use ? Listen to them. "Turn ye, turn ye, O house of Israel, why will ye die." As though God did beseech you by us. "Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Rom. 10. 1.

It was tender expostulation and intreaty, mingled with solemn warnings, and the outpourings of a soul filled with the love of God, and an affectionate concern for the salvation of his fellow men, that gave Whitfield such a power over the vast multitudes,who attended his preaching. He would frequently be in tears before he began to speak. And while he was addressing the people on the grand concerns of judgment and of mercy, he was sometimes compelled to pause and give relief to his feelings by weeping. If we who are ministers had more of the spirit of Whitfield, it would not be difficult to seek out acceptable words. Instead of studying and contriving to produce some mechanical effect, the promptings of the heart wonld dictate words which in the hand of the Lord would become effectual to salvation.

To you my brother who are about to be ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, this subject, should be one of peculiar interest. When you consider, that you are set for the defence of the gospel. And that the great object of your life will be to bring sinners to the obedience of the faith, and that these objects are in a great measure to be attained by the words in which you accost your hearers, you must feel that a great responsibility rests upon you. The never dying interests of this congregation are to a certain degree committed to your trust.

Your use of right or wrong words my brother, will have an important influence not only on the increase or decay of personal piety among your people, but on their unutterable bliss or their unutterable anguish. The probability that they may be your crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord God—or your most bitter and cruel tormenters in the day of God's wrath, will sometimes make you tremble.

How important then, that when you stand before this people, you should use sound speech that cannot be condemned. Let it be your concern at all times that you may be a workman who need not be ashamed

When the apostle is speaking of the necessity of using words which can be understood, he illustrates his views by alluding to military practice. If, says he, the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle. The trumpet is sounded to summons the

soldiers to arms—to tell them to advance or to sound a retreat. But if it give an uncertain sound they will be at a loss what to do. So it will be with your hearers; if you use signs which they do not understand. If through your unskilfulness you should sound a retreat instead of an advance. If you should parley with the god of this world instead of sound to arms and to contest—you will not be instrumental of saving the souls committed to your charge. You may be the means of their final ruin.

If you would profit your hearers and desire that your own profit should appear to all—meditate on these things. Give yourself to reading, and ask for the wisdom which cometh from above.

Endeavor to understand the nature and power of words generally. Especially the meaning of the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth. Be mighty in the scriptures. And by previous meditation and study, cast off the mere verbage of speech. Compress your thoughts in as few words as possible. Bring them together as the rays of light are by a glass brought to a focus. Then they will shine more brightly on the minds of your hearers, and penetrate their hearts with a warmth that is celestial.

If in addition to the observance of these things—you live my brother, under the influence of a spirit of piety; cherishing the simple desire in all your labours to do good—and feeling constantly your dependance on the Spirit of God to prosper all your ministrations—then you may confidently anticipate, that the Lord will give testimony to the word of his grace, and that among this people the word of the Lord shall have free course and be glorified.

And now my brother, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

CHARGE.

HAVING been set a part to the gospel ministry by prayer, and the laying on of hands, we now recognize you, my brother, as placed in that sacred, and responsible office. You will meet the people of your charge, in the character of a teacher, and an ambassador for Christ. It will devolve upon you to explain, and illustrate the adorable perfections of Jehovah; the nature, and claims of his moral government ; and the character, and state of man as a subject of that government. You are invested with divine authority, to propose to men, terms of peace and reconciliation with their Maker. On the part of Jehovah, you are bound to maintain his honour, and the rights of his government. Should you misrepresent his character, or relinquish any part of his rights and claim, how will you answer it at the tribunal of your Judge ? On the part of your fellow-sinners, you are to labour to secure their salvation. Should you fail in stating the terms of life, as they have been proposed by Jehovah himself, and misguid your hearers, will they not perish, and their blood be required at your hands ?

You are not left, as are the sons of natural science, to the feeble investigation of reason. A divine revelation is put into your hands. The bible is your guide; from that sacred book, you will derive all the instruction which you may impart. It will be a question with you, Sir, of the highest importance. What does the bible teach ? Rising above the frowns and applause of men, and above the pride of human intellect; and submitting to the guidance of divine inspiration, you will teach your hearers the eternity, omnipotence, omnipresence, omnicience, and immutability of God, his inflexable justice, his infinite, knowledge, wisdom, holiness and benevolence. You will teach the doctrine of the Trinity ; that there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. You will exhibit the spirituality, extent, and justice of God's moral law ; you will show from the scriptures, that through the interposition of Christ, not one jot, or tittle of it is made void, but rather that it is fulfiled, and magnified. You will teach men the total depravity of their hearts; that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and therefore, all their moral actions are unholy. That the unholy disposition of their hearts is their only inability ; that it is their duty to love God, repent of sin, and believe in Christ. That as the heart in man is fully set to do evil, there is no ground of hope, that any will return to God, unless they are renewed by the Holy Spirit ; but as God usually affords his grace, in connexion with the use of means, it is important they should attend on the dispensation of the gospel, which is to be preached to every creature. With great plainness, you will declare, that the sufferings and death of Christ have made an atonement for sin, and are constituted the only medium of pardon and acceptance with God.

You will also teach your hearers, that the blessings of grace are bestowed upon sinners in a sovereign manner ; that God saves them, and calls them, not according to their works, but according to his purpose, and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus, before the world began. That as the salvation of believers depends upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and upon the promise, and power, and honour of Jehovah, they shall never perish. And, solemn and painful as it may be, to point out the guilt and danger of those whom you love, yet, you will declare from the word of God, that he that believeth not shall be damned, and shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

The course of duty which lies before you, my brother, presents none of the facinating charms of popular applause. The prejudices and lusts of men will be arrayed against you. In the discharge of your duty, you will be met by formidable talents, kindled to action, by that pride which disdains the humbling doctrines of the Cross. This is a day of rebuke and blasphemy. Put on therefore the whole armour of God. Though your love to the truth, your faith and patience may be severely tried, yet we have confidence, that you feel bound, by ties, stronger than the fears of death, to preach the faith once delivered to the saints.

In rightly dividing the word of truth, you will remember with tender faithfulness, the humble penitent, whose language is, What must I do to be saved? You will point such to the Lamb of God, whose blood cleanseth from all sin ; and explain to them the nature, and necessity of the atonement which he has made. Here, you will delight to exhibit before them, the character of the adorable Redeemer; and, for their encouragement, assure them, that in him dwells the fulness of the Godhead—that he is God over all, blessed forever—and that, being the true God, and eternal life he is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him. Also, that he is graciously disposed to receive them, and has said, him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out. And here you will not fail to distinguish that affectionate, humble reliance on Jesus, which the gospel requires from a bold confidence, which is the offspring of deception.

While discharging the duties of a pastor, with this people, you will labour for the edification of the church ; in doing this, you will teach them the nature, and design of the ordinances of the gospel. These ordinances you will administer ; and also, take the oversight of the discipline of the church. The ordinances of the gospel are of great importance, and you, my brother, are under the most sacred obligation to administer them, according to the pattern laid before you in the scriptures. Yov are there commanded to baptize those who receive instruction, and believe; and you are not commanded to baptize any others. As a qualification for baptism, Inspired men required repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ ; and the Holy Spirit has recorded the baptism of many such, and of no others ; you will therefore baptize such, and no others.

Believers, in the apostolic age, were buried with Christ by baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. No intimation is given that baptism was, in that day, ever conceived of in any other mode ; you are therefore authorized to bury by baptism, or which is the same thing, to immerse believers ; but you have not scripture authority to administer upon them any other ceremony, under the name of baptism.

The churches, which were gathered by the apostles, were composed of baptized believers, both male and female ; and we do not read, in the scriptures, that any others were received into them. You will therefore, my brother, receive such and no others into this church.

The spirit of inspiration has recorded, that the Lord's supper was administered to churches composed of those, who professed faith in Christ, but has made no record of its being administered to any others ; you have therefore divine authority for administering that ordinance to baptized believers, both male and female ; but for administering it to any others—you have no divine authority.

In the discharge of your pastoral duties, you will visit the several members of your flock, as their circumstances may require ; and particularly, the chamber of sickness and death. There, it may be expected, your heart will often be moved with the tenderest sympathy ; but there too, an awful responsibility rests upon you to be faithful, to the trust reposed in you.

In the discharge of your arduous and difficult duties, nothing may be substituted for spiritual mindedness, " it is life and peace." You will need the constant teaching, and guidance of the divine Spirit. By his influence the understanding is illuminated, the heart quickened, and the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the gospel are clearly apprehended, and become precious to the soul. It is of great importance, my brother, that you should live near your divine Lord ; that your daily deportment should be such, as becometh the gospel ; that in all things, you should set a worthy example before the people of your charge ; that your life should be a course of prayer, and watchfulness, and self denial ; this will impart a salutary and powerful influence to your public labours. You will then not be left in darkness, but will enjoy the light of life.

While you study to show yourself a workman, approved unto God, and that your profiting may appear unto all men, your dependance will be humbly placed on the Holy Spirit's gracious aid. In all your *trials*, a life of faith and prayer will be attended with abundant support and comfort. " I charge thee therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and kingdom, preach the word ; be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, make full proof of thy ministry.

I need not say, that worldly emoluments cannot be expected as an encouragement in your labours. Your duty precludes those pursuits by which wealth, and honourable distinctions are acquired. Nor can you expect a very liberal reward from those, whose guilt you expose, whose self-complacency, false hopes, and unholy gratifications you are laboring to destroy. But you have encouragement infinitely more substantial: Success in your work, in connexion with the divine approbation constitutes the most desirable encouragement. The ultimate design of your ministry is, to exhibit the divine benevolence, and to save your fellow men from the insufferable miseries of eternal wo, and to prepare them for the honours and felicity of the heavenly state. Now, if success were only possible, we should feel a mighty impulse in this work. But this is not the state of your labours; you have a divine assurance of success—your labours shall not be in vain in the Lord.

The nature of your labours is such, that to succeed in them must be attended with the highest delight, and encouragement. Is it desirable to be daily conversant with the holy scriptures—to reflect much upon the perfections of God—to look into the mysteries of redemption, and to survey the grace, the love, and the mercy revealed in that wonderful plan—to live by the faith of the Son of God—to be frequently at the throne of grace—to maintain an intimate and constant communion with the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit—this, the duties of your office will render indispensable. Is it a desirable work to justify the ways of God to men—to unfold, and recommend the beauties of the adorable Saviour—to bring to view his compassion, and condescension, and to show men how much he has done and suffered, to effect their salvation? This is included in the work of the ministry. Is it desirable to be employed, by divine commission, to enlighten the dark cell of the benighted prison—to remove the chains and fetters from the penitent convict, and lead him out from his miseries, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God? This it will be your privilege to do. Is it a desirable employment to lead the redeemed, beloved bride of Christ into the ordinances, and other privileges of the gospel—to supply, from a plentiful store, the hungry and thirsty, the naked and forlorn—to remove the fears of the trembling, to strengthen the weak, and to console the mourner? This is included in the labours on which, you this day enter. Is it desirable to meet in the realms of love and joy, those, whom we instrumentally saved from the miseries of the second death, and guided, and comforted, and encouraged while they were passing this vale of tears—to be distinguished, at the last day, as having been instrumental of effecting infinitely more good than philosophers, and statesmen; than the nobles, and kings of the earth; and that, when the tremendous scenes of the final judgment shall close, the King of glory should address us, with the divine plaudit, well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord? This honour. my brother, awaits every faithful minister of Christ.

FELLOWSHIP.

Beloved Brother:

With devout gratitude to the Father of all mercies, for the grace which we trust he has shown you, I present you, in behalf of the Council, this hand of fellowship. You know, my brother what it means. This assembly know what it means. It speaks a language easily understood. With feelings of christian affection, we admit you to the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ—to the ministry of the glorious gospel of the blessed God—to the pastoral care of this church and congregation—to the Cumberland Baptist Association, of which you are now a member—to this youthful, growing State of Maine, which God has signalized by many civil and religious blessings. In these several relations we hail you, with joyful hearts, as a fellow labourer sent us by the King of Zion. May the Lord Almighty bless thee, my brother, and make you thee blessing. May you be to this people as the dew of Herman, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded his blessing, even life forever more.

collecting in the isles, or in the vestibule, exchanging salutations, and conversing on topics foreign from the subject of his discourse. You may deceive yourselves into the belief that it is a mark of friendliness and brotherly love. But it is one of the most effectual devices of Satan, to "*take away the word out of your hearts, lest ye should believe and be saved,*"

Be not particular or hypocritical in regard to his preaching. If, like Peter, he warmly enforce upon the sinner the duty of repentance and faith, and, like James, require a demonstration of your religion by works of obedience, do not call him an *Arminian*. If, like Paul, he declare, that justification is by "the righteousness of Christ," "without the deeds of the law," you will not denounce him as an *Antinomian*. Allow him to preach whatsoever he considers to be the truth; and though he may deviate "a few hair breadths" from your standard, yet it is quite possible that he may coincide with the scriptures, and that your standard has become a little warped.—"Brother Whitefield," said one of his hearers, "your sermon to-day had one *small* mistake." After a moment's pause the preacher calmly inquired—"Will it injure any man's soul?"—"O no," replied his captious complainant,—"I presume no one noticed it but myself." "Well then," says the man of God, "I do not care."

Occupying a post of such magnitude as this—in the metropolis of an enterprising and thriving State, you must anticipate that heavy requisitions will be made upon his time, his resources, his labours, for the benefit of the rising cause of evangelical truth. The constitution of new churches, the ordination of ministers, the anniversaries of Missionary Societies, Associations, and State Conventions, will demand a portion of his time and efforts, and you must cheerfully surrender for the general promotion of Zion's interests.

The duty of praying for your pastor is so obvious that we scarcely need mention it. In your closets—in your families—in every season of private and public devotion, remember him who watches for your souls. Pray for his health—pray that he may enjoy his intellectual faculties in full vigour—that he may be liberated from the fear of men, and the love of popular applause—that he may have frequent and intimate communion with the Saviour—that his views of evangelical truth may be clear and definite—that he may have strength and courage to labor with persevering and unfainting assiduity—and that he may speedily be cheered by beholding the fruits of his toil gathering home to God.

My beloved friends—whosoever of you are connected with this congregation—by the services of this occasion, a relation has been consummated between you and the pastor of your choice, which devolves on you responsibilities of the most solemn and momentous character. The results of this connexion will have an important bearing upon your immortal destinies. For the manner in which you treat him, and especially his message, Christ will hold you accountable at his judgment seat. God, we hope will make him faithful to his trust, and enable him to preserve his garments pure of your blood. O, hear the warning from his lips—and hear as for Eternity!—Remember the inconceivable value of your souls—come with penitential sorrow to the feet of the Saviour—surrender yourselves to his merciful protection—and washed in the blood of atonement, unite with the chorus of Heaven, in the everlasting song of glory to God and the Lamb.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE BAPTIZED;

OR,

BAPTISM AN EMBLEM

OF THE

DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST,

AS CONNECTED WITH THE

STATE AND PROSPECTS OF THE BELIEVER.

A

SERMON

Delivered before the Boston Baptist Association, Introductory to their Session at Cambridge, Mass.

SEPT. 17, A. D. 1828.

BY IRAH CHASE,
PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY
IN THE NEWTON THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.

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SERMON.

In the history of our redemption, what event is it, my brethren, that holds the most prominent place? What is it that is the centre and soul of the system? It is the death of Christ. Remove this, and you tear from the heavens the sun of the new creation. It is this that was prefigured by sacrifices. It is this that prophecy foretold as the event on which nations should gaze with astonishment. It is this that has touched the hearts, and awaked the songs of the redeemed on earth, and that will forever fill heaven with admiration and praise. It is this that is the source of all our spiritual life. It associates with itself the most impressive truths; and it supplies us with the steadiest and the strongest motives to the performance of every Christian duty. Whatever, therefore, the holy Scriptures exhibit as adapted to impress this grand event upon our minds, cannot be a theme unworthy of our contemplation. May we all consider ourselves as standing near the cross and the grave of our Lord, and cherish those feelings only which we know that he will approve.

In the Epistle to the *Romans*, vi. 3, it is written:

KNOW YE NOT THAT SO MANY OF US AS WERE BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST, WERE BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH?

The text, manifestly, alludes to the fact that *Baptism is an emblem of the death and resurrection of Christ, as connected with the state and prospects of the believer;* and thus it reminds us of the *obligations of the baptized.*

This ordinance as administered by John to such as repented, was a divine institution, having reference to Christ and the remission of sins.

We have the testimony of Mark: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." We have the testimony of Matthew: "Then went out to him

Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan," that is, many from all parts, "and were baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins." We have the testimony of Paul: "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."* We have the testimony of Josephus, the Jewish historian, which, so far as it goes, coincides remarkably with the Scriptural account. It reads thus: "Herod slew John that was called the Baptist, who was a good man; and who commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism; for that the washing with water would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away of some sins only, but for the purification of the body; supposing still that the soul was purified before by righteousness."† We have the words of our Saviour himself, by which he confounded the captious Pharisees: "The baptism of John—was it from heaven, or of men?" John, an evangelist assures us, "was a man sent from God;" and, manifestly referring to God, he himself begins a declaration with the words, He that sent me to baptize.

From these testimonies, my brethren, it is evident that John was specially and divinely commissioned for his work; that he required of such as came to his baptism a previous change of character, a previous purification of soul; and that he directed them to the great object of Christian faith, "saying unto the people that they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

In all these respects there was something new and peculiar. It was not an ablution prescribed in the law of Moses.‡ It was not one of the divers washings, or immersions, or bathings that had been suggested by personal convenience, or dictated by Jewish scrupulosity, and had been received by tradition from the fathers. It was not the ceremony which in that age, when the Jews as a people, were sunk under the dominion of a foreign power, seldom occurred,—an ablution of a heathen and his family upon becoming incorporated with the Jewish nation—an ablution which Pharisaical notions of uncleanness may have added to the circumcision which God had commanded.§ Nor was it that ablution or bathing which made a part of the process in admitting candidates into the Essean sect, a sort of Pharisees, and which was daily practised by its members; for that, though a thousand times more frequent than the ablution, just mentioned, of circumcised heathen proselytes, was, like this, a mere human device, and performed by the subjects of it themselves. It was accompanied with no confession of sins; it spake of no remission; it cast no look of faith towards the great Messiah.‖

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* Acts xix. 4. † Antiq. B. xviii. c 5. § 2. ‡ Lev. xi. 32. xv. 11, 13.
§ Note A. ‖ Note B.

Baptism, however, as administered by John, was easily associated with one idea, which, in a greater or less degree, was common to all the other ablutions known among the Jews—the idea of purification. But the purification which it indicated was a purification, not from ceremonial nor imaginary uncleanness, but from sin; *supposing still*, says Josephus, *that the soul was purified before by righteousness.* And here let us never forget that while John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, he associated this with believing on Christ, whom he denominates "the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."*

It was an acknowledged principle among the Jews that new laws were to be introduced in the times and by the hand of the Messiah; and well it might be. For numerous predictions in the Old Testament represent him as the supreme lawgiver of his people. It was also a well known truth that he was to "save his people from their sins." But how this was to be done was not distinctly perceived by most even of his own disciples, till after his resurrection from the dead. And yet they had a saving faith in him. Yes; and at his command, they partook of the emblems of his body broken and his blood shed as their spiritual sustenance; while, even amidst his explicit declarations, they had but a very indistinct idea of the matter, compared with that which was presented to their minds after his resurrection. Still the bread and the wine were in fact and in the view of him who appointed them, emblems of all that the disciples afterwards, at the time of their greatest illumination, perceived them to indicate. In a manner somewhat similar, baptism was in fact and in the view of him who appointed it, an emblem of more than was clearly and distinctly perceived by all the baptized before the resurrection of Christ.

So, too, the import of that emblematical act which our Lord exhibited in washing the feet of his disciples, was not fully perceived at the time; and he said to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."†

Before the resurrection of Christ, baptism, whether administered by his own disciples under his own eye, or by John who continued to testify of him, and, as a faithful messenger, to promote his cause, was received because it was divinely commanded. It was understood in part, but not entirely. It was readily perceived to indicate a purification, a purification that was somehow connected with the coming of the Messiah, to whom the baptized were to yield themselves as confiding and obedient subjects of his kingdom. But how this purification—this remission of sins—was connected with the Messiah, was to be developed after he had borne our sins in his own body on the tree, and had risen from the dead. "Then opened he their understanding, that

* John i. 29. † John xiii. 7.

they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."* "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved."†

There is another and a nearer view, my brethren, which it becomes us to take of this subject.

John, in obedience to the divine command, appeared at Enon and on the banks of the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; for he knew that the Messiah was soon to be manifested. But who the individual was, he knew not. He had lived in retirement amidst the seclusion of "the hill country." From his childhood, he "was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel." He had, it would seem, no personal acquaintance with Jesus, who, after his early infancy, except an occasional visit to Jerusalem, passed his time till he was thirty years of age, in a different part of Palestine, at Nazareth, in Galilee.

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" If he had known Jesus at all, it is certain that he had not known him to be the Messiah. But now an intimation of the fact is given. The holy one stands before him in mysterious meekness and majesty. John, under the influences of the Divine Spirit, feels an impression that it is indeed the holy one; and, conscious of his own inferiority, he shrinks from the high service proposed. "Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness"—to perform every duty, every act that pertaineth to our stations. It is thine to baptize; it is mine to obey the counsel of God, and be baptized. Thou prophet of the highest, sent to prepare my way,—I come to do my Father's will.

Then he complied. It was a peculiar case; and it was met in a correspondent manner. Of Christ was required no repentance, no confessing of sins, no faith in him who was to come. For he it was himself. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. It was himself, who was to suffer, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. It was himself through whom at length, as having suffered, died, and risen from the grave, repentance and remission of sins were to be preached among all nations.

No matter whether John fully understood all this or not. He that sent him to baptize understood it all. And the Saviour himself who

* Luke xxiv. 45—47. † Mark xvi. 15, 16.

was now entering publicly upon the great work which involved his death for the remission of sins and his rising again for our justification, understood it all.

John heard the expression of his will, and reverently acquiesced. It was a moment of profound and impressive silence. It was the moment of our Saviour's openly giving himself up to the work of our redemption; not to the Levitical priesthood, for he was not a priest after the order of Aaron;* nor to the office merely of a public teacher, for in order to enter on such an office neither Scripture nor usage required the baptism; but to his own peculiar office, the most prominent part of which was the laying down of his life and taking it again, that we might be purified from our iniquities. Thus, besides sanctioning baptism by his example, he was consecrated and sent forth into the world.

"And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."†

Can you doubt, my brethren, why he was so signally announced to the world as the *beloved son*, at his baptism? Hear his own words: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again."‡ So, on the mount of transfiguration, when Moses and Elias appeared in their glory and conversed with him concerning "his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem," "a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."§

Knowing as he did at the time of his baptism, the sufferings which were connected with the work on which he was entering, and that they were requisite to our being cleansed from sin, he shrunk not back. In his own view and in the view of heaven, his being baptized was a fit and striking emblematical declaration of his voluntarily yielding himself up to those sufferings, with the confidence of emerging. To represent one as overwhelmed in water, was a well known figure indicating deep afflictions. In the forty-second Psalm, the afflicted David cries, "O my God, my soul is cast down within me.—All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." The same language is heard also in the sixty-ninth: "I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me."

Thus our Saviour associated in his own mind the idea of his sufferings with that of our being cleansed from sin; and in due time he took care to have these ideas associated in the minds of his disciples. Even previously to his final sufferings, (availing himself of the different sen-

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* Heb. vii. 11. † Matt. iii. 16, 17. ‡ John x. 17. § Matt. xvii. 5. Luke ix. 31.

ses of the same word as applied to different subjects,) he observes in his ever memorable prayer just before his being betrayed, "For their sakes I sanctify myself," or give myself up to my work, and offer myself a sacrifice, "that they also may be sanctified," or that they, having a sacrifice offered for them, may be cleansed, "through thy truth."* The import of this passage cannot be mistaken, when we remember the declaration of Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, like the washing of water, by the word."†

In both of these passages, as well as in many others, we are taught that our being cleansed from sin is most closely connected with the sufferings of our Lord.

Of these sufferings as well as of the cleansing, baptism, we have seen, was a lively emblem. Is there one in this assembly who can doubt it? Then let him hear the words of our Lord himself, as recorded by Matthew and by Mark, where, alluding most clearly to his sufferings, he asks, "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" and in the twelfth chapter of Luke,‡ where also he most clearly represents his sufferings as a baptism: 'I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

The appearing of John was the beginning of the new state of things, connected with the coming of the Messiah, or, as the evangelist Mark expresses it, *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*§ Divinely commissioned, he came to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. He proclaimed the joyous tidings of the Messiah's approach; and he baptized the penitent, teaching them to trust in the coming Redeemer. The Redeemer came. He sanctioned what had been done; and he authorized his disciples to continue the work. He shed new light upon the spiritual nature of his kingdom. On the evening before his crucifixion, he ordained a commemoration, that was to be often repeated, of his giving his broken body and his gushing blood to be as it were the food which should nourish and sustain such as should be born into his spiritual kingdom. But did he abrogate that emblem which refers our very existence as Christians, our very birth into his spiritual kingdom, to his dying and rising again? No. But, after his triumphant resurrection he adapted the style of this emblem to that full display of his character which it was then expedient to make. He gave to his ministers their final commission, in which he commanded them to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,—of the Father who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son; of the Son who gave up himself, the just for the unjust; and of

* John xvii. 19. † Eph. v. 26. Note C. ‡ 50 v. § Note D.

the Holy Ghost, who through the proclamation of the truth exhibiting Christ and him crucified, regenerates and sanctifies our souls. At the same time, he commanded them to remain at Jerusalem till they were endued with power from on high. He ascended to heaven. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down, and his energies were manifested in the conversion of thousands. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*

Here, in the history of the disciples, the word *church* first occurs; for here a church of Christ is first exhibited to the world as distinctly organized, and, amidst special manifestations of the Divine power, maintaining his doctrine and his ordinances. The dawn of the Christian dispensation had been beheld in the reformation of which John was the honoured instrument. The light which then began to gladden the hearts, and to guide the steps of the pious, had been true and evangelic. The darkness had been rapidly, though gradually, passing away; and now the church, like the risen sun, was seen in her full glory. Now the apostles were illuminated by that Spirit which the Saviour had promised, as about to come, and guide them into all the truth.†

Now, then, concerning baptism we may confidently receive their representations, as exhibiting, truly and faithfully, the mind of our Lord.

They represent us as being by nature dead *in* sin, polluted,—but by grace dead *to* sin, and hence putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, putting off "the old man which is corrupt."‡ They represent us as thus cleansed from that corruption of our former, our unrenewed state, and, when we put off, and as it were deposited the old man, the body of sinful propensities, coming forth new creatures, beginning a new, a holy life, and cherishing the hope of life eternal. Of this they represent baptism as the emblem. And, my brethren, they represent it as also the emblem of what stands,—and God grant that in our minds it may forever stand,—in most endearing connexion with our new birth and our hopes of a glorious resurrection. Need I mention what it is to which I allude? "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore," continues the Apostle, "therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more."

In the epistle to the Colossians, Paul, alluding to the author of our

* Acts ii. 47. † John xvi. 13. ‡ Eph. iv. 22.

salvation, says, *In whom ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands*—ye are characterised by that spiritual operation which consists *in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ*—the circumcision which Christ requires, the belonging indeed to his people through faith; for intimating which there is a well known observance to which ye have attended: "Buried with him in baptism wherein (in which emblem) also ye are risen with him through faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses."*

Here it is manifest that the Apostle associates our being quickened, or rising to a holy life, with Christ's rising from the grave. He represents it as closely connected with the death on the cross, and as implying our confidence in the revelation which has been made of the divine power and goodness—our confidence in the suffering and rising Saviour. And he reminds us of the source of all our hopes by reminding us of the significant and solemn act by which we publicly devoted ourselves to that Saviour, being "buried with him in baptism." In our text also, the impressive interrogatory is uttered, as concerning a matter of which no Christian could be ignorant: *Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?*

In like manner,—after alluding to the time when "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened;" when overwhelming torrents from above were descending, and all the waters of the flood were

Rolling round a buried world,

and yet the ark was lifted up, emerging so as to be safe,—the Apostle Peter mentions the eight persons who were in it as being *saved by water; the like figure whereunto*, or somewhat as *even baptism doth now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh*—not a mere external washing, unconnected with faith in Christ—*but the answer of a good conscience toward God*—the profession of a conscience made tranquil towards God THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST, *who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God.*†

To acknowledge the resurrection of Christ, was, of course, to acknowledge his death as exhibited in the gospel. It was indeed to acknowledge the very seal of divinity, instamped upon his mission. To be influenced properly by this, was to be influenced by the whole system of evangelic truth. It was to stand on an eminence from which the confiding disciple beheld on the one hand, the sufferings of Christ, and on the other, the glory that should follow,—on the one hand, the grave and the cross, and, on the other, the Messiah's exaltation to the right hand of the Father, his power to "save them to the uttermost that

* Col. ii. 11—13. † 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22. Note E.

come unto God by him;"* the deliverance of an innumerable multitude of believers from the bondage of sin; the raising of them up gloriously at the last day; the adoration of all the holy in heaven, and the hallelujahs of the redeemed forever and ever.

Well might an Apostle exclaim, with an overflowing heart, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;—who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness."†

I need not inform you, my brethren, that in baptism there is retained in all its significancy, the idea of cleansing or purification. For the water in which we are buried is a purifying element. Thus there is a figurative washing away of sins, a putting off of the body of sinful propensities, and, as it were, a depositing of it in the grave, from which in this emblem, we come forth as alive from the dead, to "walk in newness of life," and at length to enter on the life everlasting, "as Christ was raised up from the dead," after his having voluntarily endured those sufferings by which, we humbly trust, we have been delivered from eternal death.

In the Lord's supper, there is a twofold reference. The bread and wine are to remind us not only of *Christ crucified*, but also of *our being spiritually fed and sustained* by his body and blood. So in baptism, there is a twofold reference;—the one, to the death and resurrection of Christ; the other, to the state and prospects of the believer, as connected with that death and resurrection.

This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ—came, introducing with heavenly authority, by his harbinger, and by his Apostles, a baptism that testifies of him as the Saviour, and exhibiting, in close connexion with this, his sufferings, even the shedding of his blood.‡ He has given not only the emblem, but also the reality. It is his blood that cleanses from all sin.§ "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever, amen."‖

It seems impossible, dear brethren, to enter into the spirit of the subject on which I have been addressing you, without feeling that

The connexion of the death and resurrection of Christ with our state and prospects as represented in our baptism, ought to be constantly borne in mind.

You all recollect the manner in which Paul introduces the subject. He introduces it as presenting a most impressive practical lesson, a

* Heb. vii. 25. † 1 Pet. i. 3. ii. 24. ‡ 1 John v. 6. § 1 John i. 7. ‖ Rev. i. 5.

most powerful dissuasive from sin. What shall we say then? he exclaims. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? *Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ*, or as his disciples, *were baptized into his death*, or did by our baptism, acknowledge his death as declared in the gospel, and, of course, all our obligations as well as hopes, connected with his laying down his life for us. And what is the grand obligation arising from his death as declared in the gospel? It is *that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness.** "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."†

Behold the wisdom and the kindness of our Lord in appointing for us who have trusted in him, a ceremony so significant as baptism, and so adapted to make on our minds an evangelic impression that shall never be forgotten. He *hath done all things well.* When I look into the holy Scriptures, our great and only directory on this subject, all is lucid and impressive. But, alas! when I cast a look over christendom; when I contemplate the history and the present state of this ordinance; when I think how sadly it has been perverted, and changed, and nullified, my heart sickens within me.—O thou who didst suffer for frail and erring mortals, and who didst say, *If ye love me, keep my commandments*, let heavenly love and light increase; let all who profess and call themselves Christians, understand and do thy will.

It is our happiness, my brethren, to feel an unshaken confidence that we are standing on scriptural ground. We have known our Master's will; and we have been baptized. We have found that his yoke is easy, and his burden is light. In obeying, we have had a sweet conciousness of his approbation. And when, from time to time, we have had occasion to gather around the baptismal waters, we have had some awakening of salutary recollections, some renewing of solemn vows, some increase of faith, some foretaste of the glory that shall be revealed. Happy, thrice happy would it be for our own souls, for the church of God, for the honour of our Lord in this ordinance, and for a perishing world, were we to recur constantly to first principles, and always bear in mind the *obligations of the baptized.*

Did I say we have known our Master's will? Yes, brethren, we have known it. We have been convinced of its being his will, that we, being dead to sin, as he died a sacrifice for sin, should in our baptism, acknowledge ourselves obligated to the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, to rise to a new and holy life, as he to whose sufferings we owe our deliverance from sin and condemnation, rose from the dead, and as we hope for a glorious resurrection, when the trumpet of the archangel shall sound.

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* 1 Pet. ii. 24. † Note F.

We have acknowledged our obligations. Heaven and earth have witnessed. Christians living in error on this subject, and attached, as men naturally are, to what has been handed down from their fathers, have marked us; and the men of the world have marked us. They have observed our lives. And have we never heard the keen reproach, What do ye more than others? Ah, my brethren! if it were only a slander, we could bear it. He who has loved us and died for us, has taught us to endure patiently the unfavorable opinions and representations of men.—"Blessed are ye when men shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake."* But when he himself—our Lord and Master—into whose death we have been baptized, casts on us the grieved and piercing look which he cast on Peter when he had denied him, and asks, What do ye more than others?—we can only go out and weep bitterly.

From his throne on high he looks down this day on all the baptized; he looks down on us; and he seems to say: '*I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forever more.* To you I have given to know my will, and to hope for eternal life through my death. Into my death ye have been baptized. Created anew, ye have been set forth as alive from the dead. From the waters of baptism ye have come forth as citizens of heaven, to sojourn awhile on earth, that ye may show to all the purity and power of my gospel, being yourselves examples of all that is lovely and of good report, in all the relations and conditions of life. It is yours to endure as seeing him who is invisible; and to shed around you an influence that shall continually evince your heavenly birth. To you I have looked to be first and foremost in promoting the interests of my kingdom. Where are ye, at this eventful period? Are ye duly mindful of what is implied in your baptism? Are ye truly and faithfully doing your utmost for that cause for which I became poor, and suffered *unto death, even the death of the cross?* Are ye dead to sin? Are ye living and laboring not for yourselves, but for me;—for the riches and honors, not of earth, but of heaven? *Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.*† To you I have intrusted the vindicating of my wisdom and goodness in the institution of baptism, by exemplifying in your lives its holy tendency. Vain are all other vindications without this. My command will not be obeyed. Men will misunderstand and neglect baptism, and cling to their own substitutions and traditions. *Neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.* Ye that have been baptized into my death must rise from the dead, in a better than the literal sense of the words. Wherever ye are, ye must stand forth, witnesses alive indeed from the dead, walking in newness of life, and presenting, every day and every hour, a lovely, practical demonstration of the import and utility of baptism,—of the

* Matt. v. 11. † Matt. xxiv. 46.

baptism which I have commanded. Ye must every one of you, become a book, and better than a book, of unanswerable arguments and eloquent expostulations, a living epistle from my own hand, known and read of all men. So will ye honor me and my command. So will baptism be restored to the place and the purposes for which I ordained it as the initiatory rite, marking the boundary between the world dead in sin, and the church alive to God, ascribing the spiritual life of the believer to my death, and whenever it is administered, proclaiming to all, by an emblem more expressive than words, that *I am the way, and the truth, and the life.*

'*These things saith the first and the last, who was dead, and is alive,—If ye love me keep my commandments.*'

O my brethren! it is indeed time to awake. Amidst all the prosperity of our churches, and all the spread of Christian truth, we have, certainly, much cause for gratitude and encouragement. But let us not be deceived into the opinion that a tenth or a hundredth, or a thousandth part of what is attainable, has already been attained. Onward, our Saviour bids us Onward, at every remembrance of our baptism. The holy Scriptures by which only we should be content to estimate our attainments, bid us Onward. Our consciences this day condemn us, even the best of us, the most active and exemplary. Truly, we have but just begun to see and to feel what devolves upon us. The zeal and enterprize of others tell us it is no time for us to recline at our ease. The signal events of the times in which we live, bid us, Up and be doing. From the forests of the West to these shores of the Atlantic, and from Halifax to New Orleans, the startling cry is heard, Awake, thou that sleepest. It is echoed from the mountains and valleys of South America—Awake, thou that sleepest. Africa utters her groans, and beseeches us. Burmah—all Asia implores us by the whitening bones of the deluded pilgrims; by the unuttered anguish of the widows perishing on the funeral piles of their deceased husbands; in a word, by all the temporal woes of idolatry and superstition; and by the millions plunging, year after year, into the abyss of a dark eternity. Europe, with all her refinement and elevation, urges us by all that is impressive in human condition and human prospects. The souls of thousands around us, of friends and kindred, of members of our own families, in danger of perishing, call us to holy circumspection and a life of prayer. The voice of our departing fathers and brethren, charges us to live to God; to remember that our time is short; and to think constantly of the example and sufferings of him who for us "humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

If now, my brethren, we do sincerely desire to please our Lord and to benefit the souls of men, let the connexion of the death and resurrection of Christ with our state and prospects, as represented in our

baptism, be engraven on our hearts. Let it produce on our whole characters an abiding, sanctifying, powerful influence.

Let us especially who are called to administer this ordinance, ourselves feel most deeply its practical import, and impress it most deeply on the minds of others; and let us ever so live that none may imagine the baptism which we administer, to be an indifferent, unmeaning, useless ceremony.

Let us all who are here assembled, open our hearts—thou Spirit of truth and love! do thou thyself open our hearts—to receive the impressions which this subject is adapted to make. Then shall we know *how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.* While we proceed to the duties before us, it will be delightful to think of those dear, departed men, whose presence used to shed a lovely influence on meetings like this, as now looking down from their lofty seats in heaven, or as hovering, like angels, over our assembly, and listening to our discussions, and rejoicing at the progress of these churches in which they felt so deep an interest while on earth. Yes, brethren, it will be delightful to think of them; and, above all, to think of Him as being present, whose we are, and whom we serve, and into whose death we have been baptized.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A. p. 4.

The learned controversies respecting Jewish proselyte baptism, have been ably examined by the late Dr. E. G. Bengel, Professor and Superintendent of the Theological Seminary at Tubingen; and it is probable that the middle course which he has adopted will commend itself, for the most part, to the approbation of the candid and intelligent. He says, 'Only we may suppose this as probable that it [proselyte baptism] first came into use gradually, as it was customary to begin to increase the religious ceremonies prescribed in the Mosaic law by many traditional additions in the period after the return of the nation from the Babylonish exile; that accordingly it may be considered so far a Pharisaical addition, as the adding of new observances to what was prescribed in the written law, belongs especially to the character of the Pharisees; although *this* addition perhaps may have been introduced before a Pharisean sect had become so formed as to be opposed to other parties. . . . . *It was reckoned in the same class with all those other lustrations to which they were accustomed.* . . . . It was not regarded as a *principal thing*, nor as an essentially necessary part of proselyte consecration. . . . . But the entirely changed condition to which the Jews found themselves reduced by the overthrow of their state and of their temple,' (A. D. 70,) 'led at length, as it seems, to new and finally more fixed decrees and regulations on this subject." See his Examination *Ueber das Alter der Judischen Proselytentaufe.* p. 115.

In the same work, p. 63, he observes: 'John must have considered the question *why baptizest thou?* as referring to *his* baptism,—to the essential and characteristic nature of it, already well known, on account of which the Jews believed that it could be committed only to the Messiah or to one of his prophetic heralds. It was perfectly obvious that they who came with the question, had reference to *his* baptism, which was so peculiar, that there should belong to it an altogether special divine authority. It would have been quite superfluous for them to have made particular mention of *proselyte baptism, which would not have been at all thought of, in connexion with John's baptism.*'

NOTE B. p. 4.

Josephus, in giving an account of the Essenes, presents the following, among other interesting particulars: "Before sun-rising, they speak not a word about profane matters, but put up certain prayers, which they have received from their forefathers, as if they made a supplication for its rising. After this, every one of them is sent away by their curators to exercise some of those arts wherein they are skilled, in which they labour with great diligence till the fifth hour. After which they assemble themselves together again into one place, and when they have clothed themselves in white veils, they then bathe their bodies in cold water. And after this purification is over, they every one meet together in an apartment of their own, into which it is not permitted to any one of another sect to enter; while they go, after a pure manner, into the dining room, as into a certain holy temple, and quietly set themselves down. . . . . If any one hath a mind to come over to this sect, he is not immediately admitted, but he is prescribed the same method of living which they use, for a year,

while he continues excluded, and they give him also a small hatchet, and the girdle, and the white garment. And when he hath given evidence, during that time, that he can observe their continence, he approaches nearer to their way of living, and is made a partaker of the waters of purification; yet is he not even now admitted to live with them; for after this demonstration of his fortitude, his temper is tried two more years, and if he appear to be worthy, they then admit him to their society." Jewish War, B. ii. c. viii.

In regard to the words, *and is made a partaker of the waters of purification*, (or, as it stands in the original, *και καθαρωτερων των προς ἁγνειαν ὑδατων μεταλαμβανει,*) it may be well to bear in mind the statement of R. Abraham Sachut (in Juchasin, fol. 139. b.) whose description of the Essenes is taken chiefly from that of Josephus. 'After the lapse of a year, when they see that his conduct is good, they bring him in among them, and teach him to immerse himself, that they may accustom him to be a Pharisee, or one separated from others.'

Speaking of proselytes from heathenism to the Jewish nation, a Rabbi says כל הטובל צריך שיטבול כל גופו, i. e. Every subject of baptism has need that he immerse his whole body. And with this all accounts agree. It is important to remember that no male Gentile who had not been circumcised, was admitted to this ablution. For 'a male is not baptized till he is well healed of the wound occasioned by the circumcision *which always precedes.*' Masculus non baptizatur, nisi vulnusculo illo, quod e circumcisione, *quae semper praecedit*, ceperat, bene curato. See *Danzii Baptism. Proselyt. in Meuschen Nov. Test. ex Talmude et Antiq. Heb. Illustratum.* p. 283.

NOTE C. p. 8.

Like the washing of water, by the word. τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὑδατος ἐν ῥήματι. In respect to the latter part of this clause, the form of the expression in the original, it will be perceived, corresponds exactly with the rendering of our English version—*by the word*—preposition answering to preposition, and noun to noun, and the whole indicating the instrument or means. That *the word* is the instrument, will appear still more clearly by a comparison with the following passages: Rom. x. 8, the word of faith which we preach; Acts xv. 9, purifying their hearts by faith; Rom. x. 17, so then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; Eph. vi. 17, the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God; 1 Pet. i. 25, this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you; and John xvii. 17, sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. That the former part of the clause, τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὑδατος, is intended to illustrate the cleansing performed *by the word*, and, as it were, present it by a figure to the eye, may be argued from the following, among other considerations.

The original here has no preposition answering to *with* in our common version. The noun that answers to *washing*, is in that form or case (the dative) which in English is expressed most commonly by the preposition *to*, preceding the noun—*to the washing*. Now what is expressed by the dative *form of the word* in Greek, is, in Hebrew, (as it is in English), expressed by a preposition;—this Hebrew preposition לְ, meaning *to*, according to, after, or after the manner of, &c. In short, the sign of the dative case is often used as the sign of comparison and of manner. Thus, 1 Sam. xxv. 37, Nabal became לְאֶבֶן as a stone; Micah ii. 8, my people is risen up לְאוֹיֵב as an enemy; literally,

to an enemy, that is, *like to, after the manner of*, or *as*. Is. xi. 3. He shall not judge לְמַרְאֵה עֵינָיו after the sight of his eyes; literally, *to* the sight, that is, *according to*. A similar mode of expression is found in the New Testament also, the Greek of which, it is well known, is often conformed to the Hebrew idiom. In Acts xv. 1, the Judaizing teachers say, Except ye be circumcised τῷ ἔθει Μωϋσέως, *to*, that is, *according to*, or, as our translators express it, '*after* the manner' (the law) 'of Moses, ye cannot be saved.' Could there be the shadow of a doubt respecting the force of the dative case in this passage, it might be remarked that the modern Greek version exhibits the sense of the original by κατὰ τὴν τάξιν του Μωϋσέως; the Hebrew, in Hutter's Polyglott, by כְּדָבַר מֹשֶׁה; the German of Augusti and De Wette, by *nach dem Gesetz Moses;* and of Dr. Leander Van Ess, by *nach Moses Verordnung;* expressions, as every reader of these languages knows, equivalent to the English *according to the law of Moses*. Here the modern Greek version shows clearly that the dative case without a preposition may imply the same as the accusative with the preposition κατά; and one of the well known senses of this preposition is, "in accordance with the mind, will, example, or *likeness* of."—Hence in the Septuagint it corresponds with לְ (Is. xi. 3.); and with כְּ, *as* or *like*, (Lam. i. 12.), to which, as Gesenius observes, לְ is sometimes equivalent. In 1 Pet. iv. 2, the apostle, speaking of the Christian convert as having ceased from sin, adds, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh ἀνθρώπων ἐπιθυμίαις, ἀλλὰ θελήματι θεοῦ, *to* the lusts of men, but *to* the will of God; that is, that he should live not *according to* the lusts of men, but *according to* the will of God. For other examples of a similar use of the dative, see Acts xxi. 21; Gal. vi. 16; and Philip. iii. 16. Indeed, in classic Greek, as well as in Hebraistic, the dative case is often used adverbially, or to express merely the *manner* according to which an action is performed by some person or thing. Thus a Greek author says of Alexander, that he made his enemies flee δρομῳ, after the manner of, or like to a race; and an eminent linguist explains this by the adverb δρομάδην. As another illustration of this use of the dative, Buttmann gives "τᾶυτα ἐγένετο τῷδε τῷ τρόπῳ, this happened thus," or according to this manner. In English also we say of a man, he did a thing to perfection, that is, in a perfect manner; he did it to purpose, that is, according to his purpose, or effectually; he did it to admiration, that is, in an admirable manner.

With these facts in view, it seems very obvious that the phrase τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὑδατος, means *according to, after the manner of, like to*, or (to express it briefly,) *as* or *like* the washing of water.

NOTE D. p. 8.

On the topic here suggested it may be gratifying and useful to some of the readers of this sermon to see the representation given by the late Dr. Knapp, Professor of Theology in the University of Halle, and one of the brightest ornaments of the Lutheran Church in Germany. It occurs among his remarks on 1 John v. 6—11, in his *Scripta Varii Argumenti, maximam partem Exegetici et Historici*, and is as follows.

'Nor are we to consider that baptism which Jesus [by his disciples and apostles] administered, as distinct in its own nature and whole kind from that of John. For such an opinion is opposed by the authority of Christ himself and his Apostles; and if we regard these we

must confess that the baptism of each [of the harbinger and of the Messiah] was one and the same institute of God himself; (John i. 33, Matt. xxi. 25, Acts i. 22.) and that the design of each in administering it was one, inasmuch as it had the same looking to the *repentance* of the candidates and their *faith in Christ*, whether about to come, or having come already. John i. 31. iii. 27—Matt. xi. 12—Mark i. 4. Luke iii. 3. x. 24. Acts xix. 4. . . . . After John had known Jesus to be the Messiah, he sent his own disciples expressly to him *who had come*, as the one who was the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, (John i. 29—36. Acts xix. 4.); but he did not himself cease to baptize, (John iii. 23. iv. 1.); yet Jesus while John was alive and at liberty, commanded to baptize by his own authority and in his own name (John iii. 22—26. iv. 1, 2.). John co-operated harmoniously; and each, in the most friendly manner, bore testimony to the character of the other. (John iii. 27—36. Matt. xxi. 25. xi. 1. xvii, 11—). . . . . Hence among the apostles and others who had already been baptized by John (Acts xviii. 25.) no one, so far as we have any account, who professed his faith to have been placed in *Jesus* as the Messiah, was baptized anew. In the beginning of the Christian church, consisting as it did of those who had been baptized by John, they only were considered in the number of the unbaptized or wrongly-baptized, who, not having faith in Christ *Jesus* come in the flesh, were looking for *another* Christ yet to come, (compare Luke vii. 19, 20.); some of whom [may have been among those that] had openly rejected Jesus (Acts ii. 38, 41. compare v. 23 and 36); and others had been ignorant and uninstructed respecting the institutes and work of *Jesus* (Acts xix. 1—). All these, as well as those who had never received baptism, were, if received into the society of Christians, baptized in *the name of the Lord* JESUS (Acts xix. 5. Compare ii. 38. viii. 16). For they had been deficient in regard to that important injunction of John, *that they should believe on him who should come after him*, and had supposed themselves, by their baptism, obligated to John, and not to *Jesus*, whom nevertheless he himself had come to announce. Compare John i. 31—34.'

Such is the language of a venerable Lutheran, of the present age. And Calvin himself says, "The divers hands wherewith it is ministered make not the baptisme divers: but the same doctrine sheweth it to be the same baptisme. *John* and the Apostles agreed into one doctrine: both baptized into repentance, both into the forgivenesse of sinnes, both into the name of Christ, from whom was both repentance and forgivenesse of sinnes. John said thathee was the Lambe of God, by whom the sinnes of the world should bee taken away: where hee made him the sacrifice acceptable to the Father, the Propitiator of righteousnesse, the author of salvation. What could the Apostles adde to this confession? Wherefore let it trouble no man, that the old writers labour to sever the one from the other, whose voice wee ought not so much to esteeme that it may shake the certaintie of the Scripture. For who will rather harken to Chrysostome denying that forgivenesse of sinnes was comprehended in the baptisme of John, than to Luke contrariwise affirming that John preached the baptisme of repentance into the forgivenesse of sinne? Neither is that subtlety of Augustine to bee received, that in the baptisme of John, sinnes were forgiven in hope, but in the baptisme of Christ they are forgiven indeed. For whereas the Evangelist plainly testifieth, that John in his baptisme promised the forgivenesse of sinnes: what need wee to abate this title of commendation, when no necessitie compelleth us unto it? But if any man seek for a difference out of the Word of God, he shall finde none other but this, that John baptized into him that was to come, the Apostles into him that had already presented himselfe." Institutes, B. iv. c. 15. sect. 7. (Norton's translation. London, 1634.)

NOTE E. p. 10.

On this verse it is gratifying to be able to transcribe the following article from Wahl's Lexicon of the New Testament, translated by Mr. Robinson, and printed at Andover, 1825.

"'Επερώτημα, (pp. *interrogation*, Thuc. iii. 53, 54.) in N. T. *promise, engagement, profession*. 1 Pet. iii. 21. βάπτισμα—συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεὸν δι' ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, *baptism* in which is implied *the profession of a conscience tranquil towards God through* (or *on account of*) *the resurrection of Christ;* spoken probably in reference to the practice of the ancient church, in which the person about to receive baptism, was interrogated in respect to his belief, &c. something in this manner, 'Do you renounce all your former vicious dispositions and conduct, and devote yourself to the service of God through Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us?' See Justin Mart. Apol. ii. 61. with Acts viii. 37."

NOTE F. p. 12.

Buried with him by baptism.—'The language is figurative.' The word συνετάφημεν means '*we were interred or covered up in a grave*, or *laid in a tomb*,' or *buried with* Christ. How? *By baptism*, the Apostle adds; and this addition modifies the figure, and makes the sense as clear as it is possible for express words to make it. *In* or *by baptism*, then, Paul and the Christians whom he addressed were *buried*. To be crucified to the world, or dead to sin, is the character of the Christian; but to be buried with Christ by baptism, is the appointed emblematical *profession* of that character. The Apostle does not teach that believers are *crucified* with Christ, or are *dead* with Christ, or possess a *mortified* temper, *by baptism*. To have such a state of soul, to be dead in respect to sin, is one thing; and to be buried with Christ *by baptism*, is quite a different thing; for this is external, whereas the other is internal. The one is a sign; the other, the thing signified. It is only by confounding what the Apostle has kept distinct, that there can be any mistake concerning this passage. Let the honest inquirer after truth and duty, listen to the dictate of common sense; and let the religious teacher, as he expects to appear before the judgment seat of Christ, beware how he perverts the oracles of God, and darkens counsel by words without knowledge.

Jaspis, in a note on this part of his recent Latin version of the Epistles, acknowledges the truth, though he afterwards makes a feeble attempt to escape from the legitimate consequence. He says, 'Paul in this place alludes to the custom then usual, of immersing the whole body, which immersion resembled the laying of a man in a sepulchre.' Paulus hoc loco ad morem tunc usitatum respicit, totum corpus immergendi, quae immersio habebat speciem hominis in sepulchro reconditi. p. 33.

The remarks of Rosenmueller on the same passage, are worthy of serious consideration. 'Immersion in the water of baptism and coming forth out of it, was a symbol of a person's renouncing his former life, and on the contrary beginning a new one. . . . . The learned have rightly reminded us, that, on account of this emblematical meaning of baptism, the rite of *immersion* ought to have been retained in the Christian church.' *Immersio* in aqua baptismi, ex eademque egressus erat symbolum vitae pristinae abrogandae, novaeque contra instituendae. . . . . Recte monent docti, propter hunc baptismi sensum mysticum, *immersionis* ritum retineri debuisse in ecclesia Christiana. See his *Scholia in Novum Testamentum*, vol. iii. p. 454.

Such, too, was the conviction of Luther, in view of this passage, who, after speaking of baptism as a symbol of death and resurrection, says, 'On this account I could wish that such as are to be baptized, should be completely immersed into water, according to the meaning of the word,

and the signification of the ordinance, not because I think it necessary, but because it would be beautiful to have a full and perfect sign of so perfect and full a thing; *as also without doubt it was instituted by Christ.*' Hac ratione motus, vellem baptizandos penitus in aquam immergi, sicut sonat vocabulum et signat mysterium, non quod necessarium arbitrer, sed quod pulchrum foret, rei tam perfectae et plenae, signum quoque plenum et perfectum dari, sicut et institutum est sine dubio a Christo. See his work entitled *Captivitas Babylonica* in the collection *Omni. Oper.* M. LUTHERI. vol. ii. p. 76. ed. 1551.

Considering what the practice has been, the doctrine of the Lutheran church, (as well as of the church of England), on this subject, has been remarkable. In expounding it, one of her distinguished theologians of the present day, states: *To the existence of baptism belongs,* 1. *complete immersion under water, &c.* Zum Wesen der Taufe gehöret nämlich 1) das ganzliche Untertauchen unter das Wasser. u. s. w. See Bretschneiders's Dogmatik der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche. Vol. ii. p. 657.

THE VALUE OF THE SOUL.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED, DECEMBER 28th, 1825,

AT THE

Ordination

OF

MR. JAMES D. KNOWLES,

AS PASTOR OF THE SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH IN BOSTON.

BY IRAH CHASE,

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY
IN THE NEWTON THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.

BOSTON:

LINCOLN & EDMANDS, NO. 59 WASHINGTON STREET.

1826.

AT A MEETING OF THE PROPRIETORS OF THE SECOND BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE, JAN. 1, 1826—

Voted, That the thanks of this Society be presented to the Rev. Professor Chase, for his able and appropriate Sermon, delivered at the Ordination of Rev. James D. Knowles, and that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication.

Voted, That Deacons Jacob Hiler, Thomas Badger, and Heman Lincoln, be a Committee to wait on Professor Chase, and communicate the above vote.

ROBERT FENNELLY, *Clerk.*

SERMON.

MATT. XVI. 26.

WHAT IS A MAN PROFITED, IF HE SHALL GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD, AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL? OR WHAT SHALL A MAN GIVE IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS SOUL?

In the preceding verses, our Lord directs the attention of his disciples to the self-denial, which, in the present life, they must be prepared to make. He points to the fatal consequence of seeking to save their reputation, or even their lives, at the expense of religion. It is the loss of eternal life. On the other hand, he suggests the glorious reward that awaits their self-denial, and, when occasion requires, their martyrdom. *Whosoever will lose his life, for my sake, shall find it.* The meaning, it is manifest, can be no other than that he shall find *eternal* life. And as this is directly the opposite of the loss which it is declared he shall sustain who seeks to save his life, it is equally manifest that that loss can be no other than the loss of eternal life.

Here the Saviour makes an appeal to his hearers: What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, his life, his eternal life? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? The only reply which they could have made, and the inference which they must have drawn, are obvious.

If, then, temporal life is more valuable than all the riches of the world;—if it is a clear case that a man would not be profited by gaining the whole world, while in doing it he lose his temporal life,—how much less will he be profited, or rather, how great will be his loss, if by pursuing the things of the world, he lose, not his temporal life, but life *eternal.*

The *value of the* SOUL here presents itself to our contemplation. May Almighty God pour his spirit upon us, and elevate our conceptions to the grandeur of our destiny, while, on this most interesting occasion, we survey a subject in which we are all so deeply concerned.

The value of the soul may be argued, first, from

ITS CAPACITY OF KNOWLEDGE.

Man in his rudest state exhibits evidence of his elevated rank above the beasts that surround him. While in most that they do, they are led by mere instinct, he is endowed with reason. If sometimes they seem to compare ideas and deduce conclusions, it is only to a very limited

extent; but he can proceed indefinitely. While their knowledge is confined to simple ideas and such associations as are requisite to preserve their existence, or to render them serviceable to him, he is capable of generalizing and variously combining his ideas, and constantly extending the bounds of his intellectual dominion. While some of them may be taught to articulate certain words, he can comprehend their meaning, as well as express their sound, however variously they may be arranged in continued discourse. It is man only that possesses a language, or utters a train of thoughts. The ape, after all the pains you may take with him, is an ape still; for he is destitute of the human soul. But the child of the most degraded savage that roams the forest may become a philosopher.

In the common affairs of life, what innumerable exemplifications do we behold of the soul's capacity of knowledge! The various mechanic arts which have been invented, and which are daily employed for our convenience, furnish a numerous class of striking instances. Consider, too, the astonishing faculty which we possess of imbibing the thoughts of another as they flow from his lips. Consider the power which every one has of reflecting on the suggestions of others, and on external objects presented to the mind, and on the operations of the mind itself. See the facility with which children

and men in the lowest walks of life, acquire the degree of knowledge that is suited to their condition, and that their circumstances in the present world allow.

Here it will be remembered that the value of the soul ought to be estimated not so much by the knowledge which it actually possesses, amidst all the impediments with which it is encumbered in the present state of existence, as by the knowledge which we have reason to believe it is capable of possessing, when those impediments are removed. In different individuals they are diminished in a greater or a less degree. Accordingly one person attains to a higher degree of knowledge than another.

Some, whose circumstances were favourable, have by their attainments in science, evinced many of the wonderful powers of the human soul.

They have explored the intellectual world. They have traced the history of our thoughts, and presented, if I may be allowed the expression, a dissection of the human mind.

They have taught man to direct his way on the raging billows of the trackless ocean, when no beacon appears from land nor sky.

They have investigated the animal creation. There they have discovered indubitable displays of divine wisdom in the structure and economy of every animal, from man to the insect that floats on the breeze.

They have entered the vegetable kingdom, and examined and classified the subjects, 'from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall.'

They have surveyed the ages that are past. They have traced the rise of empires, and explored the secret causes of their decay.

They have discovered some of the principles by which this vast fabrick of the universe is held together. They have weighed the planets, and computed their distances, and the grand revolutions which they are performing. From their knowledge of the motions of the heavenly bodies, they have been able to foretel with precision, the time when, as the sublimest of our poets expresses it, the sun

> ——————from behind the moon,
> In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
> On half the nations, and with fear of change
> Perplexes monarchs.

Of what high destiny, of what inestimable value, my hearers, must be the soul of man, which is capable of thus ranging through the works of God, and grasping subjects so complicated and vast.

But there is another, a more ennobling kind of knowledge; and it draws the broadest line of distinction between man and every rank of beings below him. It is a knowledge of God. I mean not that any can 'find out the Almighty unto perfection.' But every child of Adam is capable

of receiving an idea of God, holy and omniscient, and of feeling an obligation to love and obey Him. This has denominated man a *religious* animal. Surely it attaches inconceivable value to his soul, and indicates the grandeur of the events to which it is hastening.

The value of the soul appears, secondly, from

ITS CAPACITY OF ENJOYMENT.

There is an exalted gratification in the acquisition of knowledge. Have none of you, when the light of some new discovery first beamed upon your minds, felt a joy similar to that of Archimedes, the philosopher of Syracuse, who in a rapture upon discovering how to solve a certain problem, ran through the city, crying, I have found! I have found!

But there are numerous other sources from which the soul is capable of deriving enjoyment. Have you known the delights of friendship?—You have known one of those sources. Have you exercised gratitude to a benefactor? You have known another of them. Have you yourself been a benefactor? You have known another of them still. The young anticipate the happiness that appears in prospect. The aged cherish the dear remembrance of former days, and of the dangers they have passed, or recal with delight the scenes of childhood. You feel an emotion of elevated enjoyment when you stand on the shore of the sea, and view the vast expanse

of rolling waters, or when you gaze on the impending cliffs of some lofty mountain, or look up to the thundering cataract of Niagara; or contemplate the bold and worthy deeds of patriotism and philanthropy amidst difficulties and dangers; or think on those designs of mercy which would wipe away the tears of the widow, and the orphan, and the oppressed, and would proceed in the grandeur of their march to the enlightening and blessing of all the nations; or when you turn to a different class of objects, and survey a beautiful landscape, clothed with the verdure and blossoms of spring; or enter the social circle, and partake in the sweet interchange of kind and worthy sentiments, the feast of the soul.

But I need not enumerate instances in which its capacity of enjoyment is exemplified. Who does not acknowledge that the pleasures of the mind are the most exquisite and noble?

And yet there are joys more elevated than any that have been mentioned, of which the soul is capable,—joys to which I fear that many whom I am now addressing are strangers. I mean the joys of true religion. But though many of you, my hearers, may never have experienced them yourselves, you will not, I hope, reject the testimony of others, who assure you that they have.

Redeemed from sin and the curse of God, the soul stands on the eternal rock, and a new song

is put into her mouth. She sings the wonders of redeeming love. She views the Saviour the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Wherever she casts her eye, she beholds new beauty in the face of creation; for she associates all that is beautiful and all that is sublime with 'the first good and the first fair.' In rapture she exclaims, 'The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice: let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.'

The immense value of the soul appears thus from its capacity of enjoyment, as well as from its capacity of knowledge. But it will appear in a still more striking manner when we consider, thirdly,

ITS IMMORTALITY.

You have just been reflecting on its capacities of knowing and enjoying. Consider now the impediments which exist in the present world, removed, and these capacities filled, and expanding, and filled FOREVER. What inconceivable value do you stamp upon the soul! . . . FOREVER, FOREVER AND EVER.

You have just heard of some of the joys of which she was capable on earth, and of the song which she commenced. She enters the regions of a blissful immortality. 'The righteous shall enter into life eternal.' She strikes her harp anew. She sings her victory through Jesus Christ, over death and the world of despair. She

associates with kindred spirits. She joins the throng of the redeemed 'before the throne, and before the Lamb.' She sees constantly more and more of the wisdom and glory of Jehovah; and she unites in the general ascription of 'Salvation unto our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.'—'Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.' Ten thousand ages roll away, and still all heaven resounds, 'Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.' Ten thousand times ten thousand ages roll away, unfolding new glories as they roll, and still the song is raised with increasing rapture, 'Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.'

In view of these overwhelming and never ending joys of the soul, into what insignificance does the earth dwindle, with all its pomp and splendour!

> The *sun* is but a spark of fire,
> A transient meteor in the sky;
> The *soul*, immortal as its Sire,
> *Shall never die.*

Were it possible, my audience, to add any thing to our conceptions of the value of the soul, it would be by considering, fourthly,

THE PRICE OF ITS REDEMPTION.

Your thoughts revert in a moment to Calvary, where the great atoning sacrifice was made. There you see the fulfilment of ancient prophecy. There you behold the accomplishment of what was signified in the offering of victims by

Abel, and by succeeding patriarchs,—there the substance, whose shadow, under the Mosaic dispensation, appeared in various types,—there the great antitype, *the Lamb of God.* There you see, in a body like our own, that mysterious personage, who, as the holy evangelist assures us, 'was in the beginning with God, and was God.' You see him by whom 'were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,'*—him whose voice the elements and legions of angels obey, nailed, in anguish, to the cross, while the earth trembles to her centre, and the heavens are shrouded in blackness. There he hung, a spectacle to men and to angels, to all rational beings in the boundless empire of Jehovah, manifesting, in the face of the universe, the displeasure of God at sin, so that, after this manifestation was made, 'he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.†'

Of what inconceivable value, then, must be the soul, for the redemption of which the Almighty himself from his eternal throne, has interposed a special expedient; an expedient which has excited the astonishment of heaven, and brought the great Messiah to the cross.

But it is time for us to pause, and consider a few reflections that naturally arise from the subject which we have been contemplating. The

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* Col. i. 16. † Rom. iii. 26.

first which presents itself is, that *There is danger of losing the soul.*

From the examination of our text and the words connected with it, we have seen that the Saviour speaks in such a manner of losing life, as shows that he must have meant the losing of eternal life. Would he, in whose lips there was no guile, have given to his creatures a groundless alarm? Would he, in so solemn a manner, have spoken of a loss of which there was no danger? Surely not. It were a mocking of the Saviour to suppose it. The inference then, to say nothing of numerous other declarations, such as that the wicked 'shall go away into everlasting punishment'*—the inference, in the present case, you perceive, is inevitable, that there is danger of losing the soul.

My next inference is, that *The loss is a tremendous one.*

By losing the soul, we mean the plunging of it into misery. So the losing of eternal life or happiness, is the incurring of eternal death or misery.

If the soul is endowed with so enlarged a capacity as we have seen, of knowing, what must be its anguish, when its knowledge shall only exhibit at a distance the happiness it has lost; or present the glorious works and ways of that Being whose enemy it has become. If the soul is ca-

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*Ma h. xxv. 46.

pable of perceiving its obligations to the Creator, how tremendous must be its condemnation, if it disregard those obligations!

If the soul is capable in so high a degree as has been suggested, of enjoyment, it is, in an equal degree, capable of misery. The greater part, doubtless, of evils experienced by man in this life, consists in troubles of the mind. What then must be the state of the soul when every faculty that was once a source of enjoyment, becomes a source of torment;—when every remembrance of the past is a dagger to the soul,—when every view of the present, is torture,—and every prospect of the future, despair!

If the soul, redeemed from sin and its consequences, can be filled with joys so exalted as we have seen; if, shielded by the great atonement, she enter heaven with songs so triumphant, how terrible must be the doom of that soul who has slighted the astonishing sacrifice made on Calvary, and 'trodden under foot the Son of God,' when she enters—not heaven, but the world of wo,—sinking self-condemned, under the full weight of that divine displeasure from which the neglected Redeemer only could deliver! And if, in the one case, the soul's immortality add so inconceivably to the value of its joys, how tremendously in the other, must it enhance its loss!—No tongue can tell. No imagination can conceive.

And am I, O my God! addressing in thy name an assembly of persons who are all, as rapidly as the now vanishing year has been speeding its flight, hastening either to the one or to the other of these conditions? Am I myself, and are we all endowed with a soul capable of so much happiness or of so much misery? Yes, my audience, these are sober realities. The gracious Messenger himself from heaven has clearly proclaimed them with the most impressive solemnity; and every principle of sound philosophy, every dictate of humanity, every sanction of God, requires us to receive the revelation as it is given, and act accordingly. I utter no figment of fanaticism, and no doubtful speculation, when I assert, that each one of us, and that every son and every daughter of the human family, is intrusted with a treasure, compared with which the earth, with all its wealth and all its empires, is a bubble.

Ye whose souls have been regenerated and brought into a state of salvation, contemplate the prospect before you; and while you are overwhelmed with wonder and unutterable gratitude, forget not that every one of you may do something for saving the souls of others. There is no one who has not an influence on some other individual. How strong the motives for humbly and earnestly employing that influence in unceasing endeavours to save the soul. An archangel

cannot compute the amount of everlasting happiness that may result from the christian deportment, and the private prayers, and the timely, heartfelt suggestions of the most inconsiderable member of the household of faith. What a field then does this subject exhibit to the benevolence of those to whom more talents have been committed!

To the heart of the pious parent, as he looks around on the circle of dear immortals committed to his charge, it addresses a lesson that words cannot express.

It calls on the youth to consider seriously how he ought to employ the vigour of his days.

It calls on the man of business to transact all his affairs in subserviency to his benefitting, in some way, the souls of men.

It calls on the man of experience to aid in this work by the paternal counsels and encouragement of venerable old age.

It calls on every one to contribute according to his ability, and to contribute joyfully, for promoting, either directly or indirectly, the spiritual welfare of his fellow-men, wherever they may be found 'on all the face of the earth.'

It charges the man of distinguished reputation to bring the whole weight of his character to bear decidedly on the furtherance of that religion without which the soul is lost.

It calls on the mothers and sisters in Christ to employ, amidst their daily duties, in the

modest but no less charming and important sphere which Providence has assigned them, all the beauty of holiness, all the loveliness, and all the accomplishments with which they have been blessed, in winning their kindred and associates to eternal life.

It calls on the man of genius, and taste, and erudition, to bring over to a thorough and consistent Christianity the current literature of his country; and in the private chamber, and in the social circle, and at the seats of learning, to point the youthful mind, with becoming reverence and emphasis, to the instructions of him who spake as never man spake,—'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.'

It calls on this Church and Society to offer today, my brethren and friends, your devout gratitude to Heaven for the prospect before you, of having here for yourselves, and your children, and others, the stated preaching of the Gospel, with the due exhibition of its ordinances, and the unwearied labours of one who is to watch for your souls, as they that must give account; for I need not stop to prove, that these are the grand means which God has ordained for the conversion and salvation of men.

Nor need I stop to say how much I rejoice with you in the confidence I have, that he who is this day to be solemnly set apart as your Pastor, will toil for you faithfully; a confidence produced by an intimate and endearing acquaintance

with him for a series of years, as a pupil in collegiate and in theological studies, and as an associate in the labours of instruction and government. But, much as I love and esteem him, the present is no time, and this is no place, for encomium.

Call to mind, one moment, in the history of our last lamentable struggle with another nation, that memorable morning when a powerful army had invaded our northern frontier, sustained by a menacing naval force that now hove in sight, and the gallant officer,* whose recent death has clothed our navy in mourning, and filled our country with grief, saw the coming onset. Think what would have been the emotions of an elder brother of his, had such a brother viewed the scene from the shore, on the eve of that tremendous conflict, and at the moment when the roar of battle commenced. I see my brother on the eve of a conflict more perilous and more momentous than the one which shook our northern frontier, and sent the thrill of exultation or of despair to the hearts of thousands. I think of the unutterable value of a single soul. I think of the multitude committed to his charge. I think, too, of his signally responsible station in reference to others besides the people of his own flock. I think how soon forty or fifty years will be past, and I seem to stand by his side, as he is giving up his account to God. . . . . .

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* Macdonough.

Fathers and brethren in the ministry! Behold in the value of the soul, the grandeur, the blessedness, the responsibility of your calling. O what holiness, what knowledge, what fervency, what wisdom, what energy of the Holy Spirit, do we need to accompany us to the work. Well might an apostle, and well might an angel exclaim, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' We will remember, and rejoice that our sufficiency is of God. Paul declares, *I have planted, Apollos watered; but* God *gave the increase.* Blessed declaration! It affords us encouragement. And by all the glorious and all the awful events that are before the immortal soul, we will be roused to the utmost diligence in cultivating the graces and the talents committed to us for the eternal welfare of our fellow-men. For this subject addresses to each of us the solemn admonition: Guide of souls! see to it that none perish through your neglect, nor your misguiding—'Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine. . . . . for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.'

Could the glorified spirit of that man of God, whose memory is embalmed in all our hearts, the late venerated Pastor of this church, be permitted now to descend among us, with what heavenly unction and benignity would he add: Leave as much as possible, O ye ministers of the precious Saviour, leave to others the adjusting of the

transient affairs of this world. Leave to them its ease and its honours. Leave to men of unhallowed ambition to contend which shall here be esteemed the greatest. 'All ye are brethren;' and reserved for each of you that shall be found to have laboured faithfully *in winning* SOULS *to Christ and salvation,* I have seen a crown of glory, in view of which all earthly distinction is nothing, and 'less than nothing and vanity.'

In closing, I must turn with a bleeding heart to those of you, my dear hearers, in this assembly, who are conscious that you are neglecting the great salvation.

Were you to gain all the pleasures, and riches, and honours, and applauses of the whole world, what are they, compared with the soul? But you expect to gain only a very small part of them. Will you, for that small part, hazard your eternal well-being? For such trifles can you endure the thought of ruining an immortal soul intrusted to you? Should it this night be required of you, what excuse could you render for having neglected its salvation? You perceive, and you acknowledge that there can be no excuse. But, alas! you still continue to neglect it. What shall I say? How shall I expostulate with you? Shall I ask you to consider again the infinite value of the soul? Shall I beg you to remember, that while it is capable of the sublimest and boundless joys, it is, in your present condition, exposed, every

moment, to all the miseries of perdition—of remorse and despair? Shall I lead you to the verge of time, and invite you to look into eternity? Or shall I conduct you back to the contemplation of the wondrous love of God to mankind in the gift of a Saviour, 'that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life?' Yes, my friend, I will lead you again to the cross of Christ. There, while you witness his agonies, while you see the blood flowing warm from his mangled body, and remember that it was for souls like yours that he died, I will entreat you to have compassion on your own soul, and no longer mock a Saviour's sufferings, nor trample on his blood, by neglecting 'repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.'

THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

A

SERMON

DELIVERED AT SOUTH-READING,

NOVEMBER 27, 1828,

ON THE DAY OF

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING.

BY GUSTAVUS F. DAVIS, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN SAID TOWN.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

ALTHOUGH the following discourse was prepared without the design of publication, yet it is, with a few verbal alterations, cheerfully submitted to public inspection, in compliance with the earnest wishes of those who have conferred many obligations on

THE AUTHOR.

JAN. 1829.

SERMON.

JOHN xviii. 36.

MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD.

THE kingdom of the Messiah was intended to be "diverse from all other kingdoms." Daniel says, (ii. 44.) "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all *these* kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." In this passage of ancient prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ, four things are worthy of notice. The God of heaven shall, in the highest sense, establish it—it shall not be left to other people, as the Babylonian was to the Medes and Persians, the Medo-Persian to the Greeks, the Grecian to the Romans, and the Roman to its barbarous invaders—it shall consume or subdue these kingdoms—and it shall endure forever.

Respecting this kingdom, however, the Jews, to whom all the predictions of the Messiah and his reign were first given, entertained very erroneous expectations. They looked for a temporal prince, wearing an imperial crown, clad in robes of state, and swaying a

royal sceptre, to release them from the Roman thraldom, to which they had been reduced.

Even the immediate disciples of Christ, seem not to have understood, at first, the spirituality of his kingdom. Two of them, James and John, ambitious of worldly distinction, made to him the following request: "Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand in thy kingdom, or, as Mark expresses it, *in thy glory*."

Not perceiving the expediency of his death, after the event had transpired, two others, on their way to Emmaus thus lamented in the sadness of their hearts: "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel!" When he made himself known to several of them, *after his passion*, still clinging to the fond idea of a temporal kingdom, they inquired, "Wilt thou not at this time restore the kingdom," i. e. the lost empire "unto Israel?"

Their blindness is the more surprising, as Jesus had so often instructed them, as to the nature of his mission. But they seem to have been "slow of heart to believe," not only what the prophets had said, but what their Lord himself had said to them on this subject.

When standing in the presence of the Roman governor, being interrogated respecting his claim to regal dignity, he said, as in the text, "My kingdom is not of this world." He frankly acknowledges himself a King; yet while advancing his title to the honours of royalty, he tacitly informs Pilate that he intended no invasion of the rights of Cesar; and that his disciples had no privileges to expect, of a secular kind, as the reward of embarking in his cause.

The fact that clearer light now beams upon the mind of professing Christians, in reference to this subject, affords abundant cause for *Thanksgiving* to God. This, I trust, will be made to appear in the following discourse, which is intended to show

IN WHAT RESPECTS THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST IS NOT OF THIS WORLD.

I. The *King* is not of this world.

In one of his discourses with the carnal Jews, he says, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: Ye are of this world; *I am not of this world.*" He did not mingle in spirit or conduct with the wicked world. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and *separate from sinners.*"

It is true, he associated with sinners, and such too as were of a most flagitious character; but it was for purposes of usefulness alone. Some of his most important instructions were drawn forth on those occasions, in which he consented to become a guest at their houses.

He was not influenced by *worldly motives*,—such as pride, ambition and avarice, which frequently control the minds of earthly kings.

His whole course on earth was so marked by humility, that it is emphatically called "his humiliation." Of what worldly king, from the time that Saul was anointed first king of Israel, down to the last coronation, among that people, could it be said to the daughter of Zion, "Behold thy king cometh unto thee, *meek and lowly?*" Yet Jesus fulfilled this prediction,

and could say in truth when addressing burdened sinners, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."

He was not ambitious of *earthly distinctions.* He fled from fame and sought retirement. When he had performed some of his most marvellous works of healing, he commanded the healed to "tell no man;" and on one occasion, when the admiring multitude would have crowned him their king, "he escaped out of their hands."

And he was equally free from that *sordid avarice* which so often sways the minds of civil potentates. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay his head." But though he was in extreme poverty, and had the riches of the world at his command, yet his history does not furnish the instance of a single effort to amass wealth. Though he could command the fishes of the sea to bring him silver or gold, he never availed himself of this power but in one instance, and then obtained but a bare sufficiency to satisfy the demands of a Roman tax-gatherer. The object of his holy soul was, the salvation of men; and he knew that through his *poverty* they must be made rich.

Well might he say, "The prince of *this world* cometh, and hath *nothing* in me."

II. The *subjects* of his kingdom are not of this world.

Remarkable are the words of our Lord, when speaking of his loyal subjects. "They are not *of the world*, even as I am not of the world—If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are *not of the world*, but I have chosen you out of the

world, therefore the world hateth you." John the Baptist required repentance, and confession on the part of such as should unite with the kingdom recently introduced.* "Repent ye," said this holy man, "for the kingdom of heaven is *at hand*."† "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" and then he baptized the penitents "in Jordan, confessing their sins."

Christ himself declares regeneration to be an indispensable qualification for admittance into his kingdom. "Except a man be born of the water and *of the Spirit*, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The apostles were no less strenuous in requiring spiritual qualifications. They had received from their Lord and Master, the commission, "Go, teach (disciple) all nations, baptizing them;" and they acted accordingly. They described such as they admitted to the privileges of the kingdom of Christ, as "gladly receiving the word," "believing and rejoicing in God," "the called of Jesus Christ," &c. They denominate them brethren, faithful brethren, holy brethren, saints—appellations which clearly describe their spiritual character. They aver of their temper, We have not received the spirit of the *world*, but the spirit which is of God; and require of them as a duty which their high vocation imposes, not to be conformed to this world.

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* We have been gravely told, that John's ministry was under the law. But Mark says, (i. 1.) that it was the "beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ;" and Luke (xvi. 16.) subjoins, "The *law* and the prophets were *until John; since that time the kingdom of God* is preached, &c." "By the mouth of *two* or three witnesses every word is established."

† "At hand," not here, but approaching, say some writers. But when Jehovah inquires, (Jer. xxiii. 23.) "Am I not a God *at hand?*" does he mean approaching, or actually *present?* Am I not a present God; "and *not afar off?*"

None are entitled to be considered subjects on account of their descent from a noble or illustrious ancestry, their opulence or power, their mental endowments, or literary attainments. The kingdom of Christ differing from that of Cesar, the character and obedience of his subjects must also materially differ. For men may be good subjects of an earthly king, and justly receive the privileges pertaining to such subjects, while they are so far from paying true allegiance to the "King of saints," as to be enemies to his reign, and utter strangers to all the blessings of his kingdom.

The kingdom of Christ "is not of this world;" it is a spiritual kingdom. Christ, therefore, is a spiritual sovereign, whose empire reaches to the mind, the conscience, and the heart; and all the subjects of his kingdom yield spiritual obedience. The subjects and allegiance must be in accordance with the character of the king, and the nature of his kingdom. A spiritual king and subjects, yielding a merely external obedience, are palpably absurd. Standing at the head of his church, in the character of a spiritual monarch, he sways the understanding by the light of his truth; the conscience, by the force of his authority; and the heart, by the constraining influence of his love.

With respect to others, over whom he rules, his dominion is that of providence, not of grace.

The church of Christ is neither national, provincial, nor parochial; but it is composed of such in every nation, province, and parish, as submissively bow to his "sceptre of righteousness," and cheerfully obey his laws.

A national establishment, such as that of England, confounds the church, "*whose names are written in heaven*, with the world, *whose names are enrolled in the Parish Register*;" but the gospel most plainly shows that, with regard to the members as well as the Head, the former "is not of this world."

III. The laws by which it is governed are not of this world.

The laws of Christ, the King of Zion, differ from human laws in perfection, extent and sanction.

The laws framed by human legislation, necessarily partake of that imperfection which attaches itself to every human production. They are often weak, partial in their operations, and unjust; but the precepts of Christ are perfect in wisdom, justice, and goodness. They are applicable to his subjects as individuals, or as organized churches, and perfectly suited to every exigency of their state. They extend to the motives and purposes of the heart, and, in this respect, are *exceeding broad*. No earthly king, in his senses, would think of controlling, by force of law, the *minds* of men: his laws take cognizance of their words and actions only, and are enforced by penalties altogether external. But our spiritual Sovereign makes his demands upon the conscience and the heart, and enforces obedience to them by sanctions, purely spiritual in their nature.

These laws, so far as they respect admission and exclusion, are to be executed by particular churches; but in no instance, under the influence of worldly motives, or by the infliction of secular penalties.

"By the laws of this kingdom," says Mr. Booth, "a credible profession of repentance and faith is required of all, previous to baptism. Such profession being considered as an evidence of their fellowship in the gospel, and of willing subjection to the authority of Christ, they are entitled to membership in a particular church. On this ground, they are admitted; nor do they forfeit their membership, except by some capital departure from that gospel, or some flagrant offence against his authority. But as, by the laws of our heavenly Sovereign, their admission to visible fellowship was entirely for spiritual purposes, their exclusion from it does not include any temporal disadvantages. Their situation as men, and as the subjects of a political state, not being altered by their church relation commencing, they should not be affected, in those respects, by the dissolution of that relation. For as the laws of Christ say nothing about the admission of one or another, on account of his domestick or civil connexions, nor yet for his wealth or influence, his parts or learning, so they are equally silent about pecuniary fines and satisfactory penances, about civil disabilities, and corporal punishment, attending the exclusion of any offender. The former, being quite foreign from qualifications for a spiritual kingdom, the latter must be utterly abhorrent from the laws by which it is governed, being manifestly the inventions of Antichrist, and the supporters of his cruel throne. For civil penalties, in this case, are adapted to generate fear and promote hypocrisy, to suppress truth and render Christianity itself suspicious."

IV. The means to be employed in building up this kingdom are not of this world.

1. It is not to be built up by *the force of arms*.

It belongs to the kingdoms of this world, to be established and advanced in glory, by war and bloodshed. It belongs to the religion of Mahomet, the false prophet, to push its conquests by the sword, and to spread the carnage of opposers in its train; but the kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of *peace*. Whenever any of its professed subjects, like the Crusaders of the eleventh century, in their wars to drive the infidels from Palestine, have attempted to promote its interests by an appeal to arms, they have acted without authority from the King. "My kingdom," says he, "is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my subjects *fight*, that I should not be delivered unto the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence."

To the same import is the declaration of the apostle, "The weapons of our warfare are *not carnal*, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds." This testimony also accords with the word of the Lord by the prophet, "It is *not by might, nor by power*, but by my *Spirit*, saith the Lord."

2. It is not to be built up by *intrigue and carnal policy*.

Many kingdoms have been founded, and their affairs managed by these means; but they are the kingdoms of this world. The kingdom of Christ needs no deep-laid schemes of worldly wisdom, no crafty deceits, no cunning intrigues; but disdains them as unworthy of her heavenly extraction.

Her ministers "have renounced the *hidden things of dishonesty*, not walking in *craftiness*, nor handling the word of God *deceitfully*, but by *manifestation of the truth*, commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." All the other subjects of this kingdom serve their King "in godly *simplicity*, in *sincerity* and in *truth*."

3. It is not to be promoted by *exterior pomp and parade*.

The glory of a secular kingdom is generally estimated by the number and wealth of its nobility, the high sounding titles and pompous parade of its civil officers, the prosperous state of its mercantile and commercial affairs, the opulence of its yeomanry, and the grandeur of its publick edifices. Superb palaces and guady vestments are very suitable for secular princes. Badges of distinction, splendid retinues, and elegant mansions, are suitable for the peers of a realm, while a more solemn kind of outward lustre, well beseems the administrators of publick justice. Such things confer a kind of dignity and consequence on temporal sovereignties; but they are entirely foreign to the spiritual empire of Christ.

The Christian church is dignified and ornamented by maintaining divine truth, and adhering to divine institutions in their primitive purity; by "the beauties of holiness," and by the presence of her meek and lowly King: and her glory incomparably transcends that of every earthly monarchy. Should any man lacker gold, or varnish the diamond, to increase their brilliancy, we should at once pronounce him insane: but their conduct is even more preposterous, who bor-

row the embellishment of secular kingdoms, to render more beauteous and attractive the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah.

4. It is not to be advanced by *legal establishments and civil enactments.*

For three hundred years it flourished, not only without the aid of the civil arm, but in opposition to its power.

Were Herod and Pilate the friends of Christ? Did Felix and Festus lend the aid of their authority and influence, to assist Paul and his companions in their labours to advance the kingdom of Christ? Were the first ten emperors of Rome friendly to the cause of the Redeemer? Alas! under their despotick and cruel reign, three millions of his loyal subjects were slain. And yet his kingdom never spread with greater rapidity, than it did in the face of this opposition, from "the rulers of *this world.*"

But in the year of our Lord 311, Constantine is elevated to the throne, and professes to become a convert to Christianity. His conversion is said to have been occasioned by the miraculous appearance of a cross in the heavens, as he was marching at the head of his armies. Be this as it may, he established Christianity as the religion of his empire. "This zealous prince," says Mosheim, "employed all the resources of his genius, *all the authority of his laws*, and all the engaging charms of his munificence and liberality, to efface, by degrees, the superstitions of paganism, and propagate Christianity in every corner of the empire."

Many hailed this event as highly auspicious; but, my hearers, what benefit did the kingdom of Christ derive from this establishment?

The church, it is true, was freed from persecuting power; her treasury was filled with gold; her places of worship were magnificently decorated; her clergy were gorgeously apparelled, and literally fattened; the noble men of the earth became her admirers and supporters; but her virgin beauties were defaced, and she became "the mother of harlots, and the abomination of the whole earth."

Multitudes of irreligious men came swarming into the church, to obtain the emoluments which princely munificence afforded. Errors, superstitions, and uncommanded rites, I had almost said, without number, were introduced to please the fancies and gratify the taste of the carnally minded.

The bishop of Rome, on account of his local situation, immediately acquired pre-eminence; and thus was laid the foundation of the papal supremacy. In less than three hundred years from this unhallowed union of church and state, he assumed the title of *Universal Bishop*. This was conferred on Boniface III. by Phorcas, A. D. 606, and from this period is generally dated the rise of Antichrist

The pope carried two swords, to signify ecclesiastic and civil jurisdiction.

"From the time of Boniface III. to that of Gregory VII., a period of little less than five hundred years, there were no less than one hundred and fourteen Pontiffs elevated to the papal chair."*

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* Benedict's History.

They increased in power and impiety, from year to year, until they shook empires by their papal thunder, and deposed kings and princes at their pleasure.

Behold the increasing audacity of "spiritual wickedness in *high places.*"

The first pope was called *Universal Bishop*, and one would suppose this enough for the vanity of any man; but succeeding popes increased their titles, until Gregory VII. assumed the appellations of Sovereign Pontiff, Christ's Vicar, Prince of the Apostles, God on earth, Lord God the Pope, His Holiness, King of kings, and Lord of lords, Prince over all nations and kingdoms, The Most Holy and Most Blessed, Master of the universal world, Father of kings, Light of the world, Most High and Sovereign Bishop, &c.

The proper name of this Pontiff was Hildebrand; but *fire-brand* has been suggested as more appropriate. To what a height of wickedness had the union of church and state now arisen!

"But turn yet again, and see greater abominations."

In the twelfth century the Inquisition is established. This tribunal was set up by the popes, for the examination and trial of hereticks, i. e. such as refused to admit the supremacy of the pope, and conform to the superstitions of the church of Rome. The managers of this tribunal were called "The holy fathers of the Inquisition." They inflicted the most terrible tortures which hellish ingenuity could invent, on the miserable objects of papal vengeance; and in the space of thirty years, put one hundred and fifty thousands to death. Indeed, every plan of persecution was devised and

executed to destroy the dissenters from the established church.

Among others, a marriage was concluded between Henry, the young king of Navarre, and the French king's sister. The principal protestants were invited to celebrate the nuptials at Paris, with the cruel design of putting them all to death in one night.

At midnight of the eve of Bartholomew 1572, the alarm bell of the Palais Royale was rung as the signal of death. Sixty thousand men armed with pistols, pikes, cutlasses, poinards, knives, and other implements of death, ran through the city, and commenced an indiscriminate massacre of all whom they met. A scene ensued which beggars description: but in the midst of it, many Romish priests ran about the city with crucifixes in one hand, and daggers in the other, to encourage the slaughter. The king afterwards boasted that he had put seventy thousand hereticks to death. Among these "about five hundred Protestant barons, knights, and gentlemen who had come to honour the wedding, were barbarously butchered in their beds."*

"But turn yet again, and see greater abominations."

"The sale of indulgencies," says a late historian,† "was the most infamous traffick of the church of Rome. The bishops had long made a trade of the vices of mankind; that is, they compounded with them, and for certain sums, remitted the severe penances they had been sentenced to endure; and sinners, especially rich

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* See Trial of Antichrist. † Rev. David Benedict.

ones, finding it less troublesome to pay their money, than to repent of their crimes, the bishops soon established a gainful trade."

But the popes, at length, monopolized this lucrative traffic to themselves, and engaged certain monks to make excursions abroad, and promote the sale of indulgencies. An extract from the tax-book of the Roman Chancery will show you something of its nature. "Absolution for killing one's father or mother, one ducat, five carlins: ditto, for all acts of lewdness, committed by a clerk, with dispensation to take orders thirty-six tounois, three ducats," &c.

One friar collected one hundred and twenty crowns among the Swiss only. No one acted more conspicuously in this business, than John Tetsel. This infamous pardon-monger travelled through Germany, and for certain prices proclaimed the pardons of the pope, for all sins past, present, and to come.*

These, my hearers, are some of the evils which have prevailed, to a greater or less extent, in all foreign countries to which the dominion of his holiness, or rather *un*holiness, the Pope, has extended—in every land in which an unhallowed alliance has been formed between church and state.

It may now be gratifying to you, to hear some facts, connected with the union of church and state in this country.

The pilgrims left their own country on account of legal oppression, and fled, to find in this western wil-

* This excess of wickedness roused the spirit of Luther and others, and led to the Reformation.

derness an asylum from that oppression; and yet, strange as it may seem, they no sooner began to form civil compacts, than they incorporated religion with them, and at once forged the chains of persecution for such as dared to dissent from *them*.

In the Description of Boston,† I find the following facts: "No man could be qualified either to elect or be elected to office, who was not a church member; and no church could be formed but by a license from a magistrate. Respecting *herisie* error, it is ordered, that if any Christian within this jurisdiction, shall openly condemn or *oppose the baptizing of infants*, or shall purposely depart the congregation at the administration of that ordinance, or shall deny the ordinance of magistracy, &c. every such person continuing obstinate therein after due means of conviction, shall be sentenced to banishment."

What had the Baptists to expect after the passage of such a law?

"Every one denying the Scripture to be the word of God, shall pay a fine not exceeding fifty pounds; to be severely whipped, not exceeding forty strokes, unless he publickly recant, in which case, he shall not pay above ten pounds, or be whipped, in case he pay not the fine."

To be consistent, they should have imposed a fine of one hundred pounds upon every one who would not repent of his sins; two hundred pounds upon every one who would not believe in Christ, and imprison-

† Pages 185—187.

ment for life, upon every one who would not love the Lord with all his heart.

The same intolerant spirit was manifested by the early settlers of our country, according to their power, as reigned in the breasts, and appeared in the acts of the Roman Pontiffs.

Even the renowned Dr. Increase Mather once said, "I believe that Antichrist hath not at this day a more probable way to advance his kingdom of darkness, than by *a toleration of all religions and persuasions.*" This intolerant spirit led them, by a solemn vote, to banish Roger Williams, an eminent Baptist, from Naumkeag, now Salem. It led them to tie up Mr. Painter at Lynn, and whip him for calling infant baptism an anti-christian ordinance; or, as they said, "for reproaching the Lord's ordinance." It led them to inflict thirty stripes with a three-corded whip, upon the back of the pious Holmes at Boston, "for denying the lawfulness of baptizing infants." It led them to nail up the meeting-house of the First Baptist Church in Boston, by order of the court. It led them to take the goods and chattels of dissenters, and sell them by publick auction, to pay taxes for the support of parish ministers, whom they could not conscientiously hear. It led them to hang the Quakers. It led them—But I forbear.

Let us, on this Day of Publick Thanksgiving and Praise, present our thankoffering to God, that the principles of religious liberty, and the obvious distinction between the church and the world, are now better

understood, and toleration in matters of conscience, more fully enjoyed.

We live in a country whose constitution admits of no established religion.* The constitution of our own state, provides that there "shall be no subordination of one religious denomination or sect to another;" and although this provision was little regarded in former times, yet since the act of 1811, but little legal oppression *in religious concerns*, has been endured. Indeed, the Orthodox Congregationalists have recently experienced the sad effects of the too close alliance, which has subsisted between their churches and parishes; and a separation has, in several instances, been found necessary. We hail, as an evidence of the increase of light on this subject, the repeal of the Test-Act, by the parliament of England.

Let us bless God that he is condescending to build up the kingdom of his dear Son in this sinful world, by those means which he has ordained; such as the preaching of his gospel, and the administration of its simple rites.

Thousands in our beloved country have been born into this kingdom during the year past. Within the bounds of two Associations of our own denomination at the south, more than were converted on the day of Pentecost, have taken upon themselves the yoke of

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*It must be very gratifying to the friends of religious liberty to see that Congress so understand the constitution, and guard with becoming scrupulosity against the least possible infringement on the rights of conscience.

allegiance; and in rapturous hosannas have sung, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord."

As a church and society, we have reason this day to thank God and take courage, in view of the unmerited favours of his hand, bestowed upon us during the past year. And among other blessings which call for our lively gratitude and praise, the establishment of yonder literary institution is not to be forgotten. It affords increased facilities for the instruction of our sons. It brings among us, a goodly number of pious young men, whose services render our religious meetings more interesting; and, in connexion with their examples, raise the tone of morality and piety in the place. It opens another spring of knowledge to the rising generation; and thus aids the cause of civil and religious liberty. Ignorance is not the mother of devotion, but of superstition. The light of science has done much towards promoting correct sentiments in Christendom, on the subject of religious freedom. The papal hierachy dreaded nothing more than the diffusion of knowledge. Every seminary of learning, then, is to be considered a friend to the views which we entertain on this subject; and should, on this account, as well as others, be patronized.

Finally, when we repair to our homes, and partake of the ample fruits of God's bounty, let us bless him that we are so happily freed from papal jurisdiction and cruelty, and may sit under our own vine and fig tree, having none to molest or make us afraid. At the

same time may we lift our desires to God, that by the means and agency of his own appointment, the kingdom of Christ may be extended, until a mighty angel from heaven shall loudly proclaim, "The kingdoms of *this world* are become the *kingdoms of our Lord*, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." AMEN.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED NOVEMBER 26, 1829,

BEING THE

DAY OF THANKSGIVING;

CONTAINING

A HISTORY

OF THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH

OF THE

SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEWPORT, (R. I.)

BY J. O. CHOULES, A. M.

Providence:

H. H. BROWN, 15 MARKET SQUARE.

1830.

At a Church Meeting of the Second Baptist Church in Newport, December, 1829:

Voted, That Deacon WILLIAM W. VERNON, E. TREVETT, and GEORGE C. SHAW, be a Committee, to wait on our Pastor, the Rev. JOHN O. CHOULES, to thank him for the very appropriate sermon preached by him on the last Thanksgiving Day; and request a copy for the press.

ROBERT ROGERS, *Church Clerk.*

Newport, December 30, 1829.

REV. SIR—We, the undersigned, in accordance with the above Vote, do present you the unfeigned thanks of the Second Baptist Church, in Newport, for the historical sermon, delivered by you, before said Church and Society, on the late day of Thanksgiving; in which the feelings and sentiments, that animated our pious forefathers, to constitute said Church, are clearly depicted, and many important facts stated, which are connected with the rise, progress, and present prosperity of said Church and Congregation; and we do respectfully solicit a copy for the press.

With Christian deference, we are,

Yours, respectfully:

WILLIAM W. VERNON,
E. TREVETT,
GEORGE C. SHAW, } *Committee.*

Newport (R. I.) January 1, 1830.

DEAR BRETHREN—I have received your communication, expressing the wish of the Church that I would publish the Discourse delivered on the day of Thanksgiving. I have no objection to accede to the request, but would state the circumstances which induced me to undertake the composition of the Sermon. Soon after my ordination, I felt a desire to know the early History of our Society. My enquiries were by no means satisfactory. I found the early records sadly defective, and even a long succession of years wanting a chronicle of their events. It occurred to me, that a diligent and speedy application to various authorities *at present* existing, might contribute to the enlargement of the Church book on important topics, and I applied myself to the task. The Church records of other Religious Societies in the State, the private journals of good men, whose interest in the welfare of the Church induced them to note down her eventful progress, and the information of aged persons in this vicinity, put me in possession of much important matter of fact, which I thought would prove of general interest to our Church and Congregation, if brought into a Discourse.

Many of the young people in the Society know but little of the events which induced their ancestors to leave the endearments of home and native land; and I have therefore endeavoured to shew the connexion existing between the persecutions of bigotry, and the exactions of superstition with the settlement of this Colony and the establishment of our religious Institutions. I would acknowledge my obligations to the labours of Callender, Backus, Benedict and Robinson.

Hoping that this attempt to promote our knowledge of the facts connected with our past history, as a Religious Society, may excite our gratitude to that God who has been our glory and defence, and strengthen our faith in his word and faithfulness,

I am, dear Brethren,

Yours with Christian regard,

J. O. CHOULES.

To Dea. W. W. VERNON,
ELEAZER TREVETT,
GEORGE C. SHAW, } *Committee.*

SERMON.

EZRA iv, 15.

"That search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers."

IT is interesting to reflect upon the past, when we can derive from the retrospect lessons of instruction and consolation: especially it is pleasing to review the former pathway of a cause which exhibits the most important relationships, and claims an eternal association with "the blessed God." The Christian Church is the cause of God, and in a high and spiritual sense it may be said to be all that we have belonging to God upon the earth.

The world was created by God for the residence of his church, and all the dispensations of his providence, for six thousand years, have taken place in marked subserviency to the economy of grace. Read the page of the world's history, and you will see that every event of matter and of mind has ultimately evinced the steady regard and good will of God to Zion. The people of the Most High have seen his goings forth on their behalf in all ages, and through the tender mercy of our God, we possess an inspired history of the church for several generations, and are thus enabled to reap advantage from the wisdom and experience of those who are now inheriting the promises.

But it is proper to acknowledge that there is much in the history of what is commonly called "the church," which we would gladly forget. Her days of darkness have been many, her enemies migh-

ty, her follies multiplied, her annals written in blood, and we sometimes wish that the falling tears of the historian had rendered her records illegible.

The well known partialities of mankind for antiquity, have caused the dark roll of many generations to be drawn out for the purpose of supporting error as well as truth in the Christian church; and *now* to rely upon the evidence of antiquity to decide the propriety of doctrine or practice in religion, is dangerous, unless indeed, we go back to the antiquity of apostolic days, because the baneful shade of superstition stalked in the track of the earliest heralds of the cross, and her children in some instances became the immediate successors of the Apostles in the church. The middle ages are properly called "dark:" They have thrown a veil upon their transactions, and the only accurate "*record*" of the church of Christ for about one thousand years, is to be found in the register "*on high.*" Yet when clouds and darkness were round the church, "God over all" was at the helm controlling her affairs, directing her destiny; and when the fulness of time had arrived, and the divine purposes were matured, a wonderful combination of events introduced the Reformation. Germany caught the flame; it spread from nation to nation, darkness disappeared before it, and God once more said, "Let there be light."

It is the singular felicity of this country, that she has no doubtful annals, either civil or religious. She is the hope of the world, the expectation of the race of man; God's hiding place for his redeemed ones; he hath elevated her in the sight of all the nations, and inscribed her glorious destiny in characters legible as if written with the lightning's beam on the dark thunder cloud. The kindreds, tribes, and tongues of other lands behold it, and they say, "Arise, let us go hence!"

Light is never so sweet as when it rises up in

darkness. At a period when the miseries of Europe seemed to call for the especial interference of Heaven, in order to justify the belief of a superintending Providence, Jehovah burst forth from his secret chambers, evinced the reality of his government, became a very present helper in the time of trouble, and shewed, that "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing."

> "Light came from heaven—the Magnet was reveal'd,
> A surer star to guide the seaman's eye,
> Than the pale glory of the Northern sky."

Then the grasping genius of Columbus planned a mighty project, as he gazed upon the star of day dipping in the far-off western wave,

> "Where the tide of light,
> Day after day roll'd down the gulf of night,
> There seem'd one waste of waters—long in vain
> His spirit brooded o'er the Atlantic main,
> When, sudden as creation burst from nought,
> Sprang a new world through his stupendous thought.
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> * * * * * *
>
> Thoughtful he wander'd on the beach alone,
> Mild o'er the deep the vesper planet shone.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> Through the slow silent hours he watched the host
> Of midnight suns, in western darkness lost,
> Till Night himself on shadowy pinions borne,
> Fled o'er the mighty waters, and the Morn
> Danc'd on the mountains—"Lights of heaven," he cried,
> "Lead on—I go to win a glorious bride!"
>
> * * * * * *
>
> The winds were prosperous, and the billows bore
> The brave adventurer to the promis'd shore;
> Far in the west, array'd in purple light,
> Dawn'd the New World on his enraptur'd sight!
> Not Adam, loosened from th' encumb'ring earth,
> Waked by the breath of God to instant birth,
> With sweeter, wilder wonder gaz'd around,
> When life within, and light without he found,

When all creation rushing o'er his soul,
He seem'd to live and breathe throughout the whole.
So felt Columbus—when divinely fair
At the last look of resolute despair,
The Hesperian Isles, from distance dimly blue,
With gradual beauty, open'd on his view.
In that proud moment his transported mind
The morning and the evening worlds combin'd,
And made the sea, that sunder'd them before,
A bond of peace, uniting shore to shore!"

Thus a new era dawned upon the world. Men of science and learning exulted at the thought of the researches to be made, and the achievements to be effected on a yet untrodden theatre; misery and despair rejoiced in the prospect of a secure asylum; and tyrants, conscious that their sceptres had lost their former potency and value, gazed most probably with chagrin, upon a spot of earth, that they foresaw would be too remote for their permanent control. The despotism of Elizabeth, the misrule of James, and his unfortunate successor, and the prelatical oppressions of Whitgift, Bancroft, and Laud, had produced much misery to a large body of the English nation.

"It is a shrewd presumption against prelacy, that the most arbitrary princes have discovered the greatest fondness for it, as if it served their designs better than any other system, called religion." The attachment has been mutual, and full-blooded prelacy has flourished only under despotism. History shows that it has uniformly attempted dominion over the private judgments and consciences of men. Thus we see the bench advancing, with its one hundred and forty-one canons, demanding subscription, and arresting the march of truth, on her way to gospel liberty. The rights of conscience being thus infringed, the preposterous attempt was made, to establish religion on the foundation of human authority. We are ready to ask the question, "When prelates fixed a religion for latest pos-

terity, why did they not complete the farce, and assess a rate of taxes to the end of time?" Men could no longer remain in the pale of a church, whose head was a King or Queen, either Lutheran, Presbyterian, Prelatical, or Popish, which had existed under all, and served the purposes of each of these.

Objections were made to the officers of the church, as characters unknown in apostolic times; such as Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Deans, Rectors, Vicars, Curates, Chancellors, Arch-Deacons, Proctors, Registers, Surrogates, to describe whose power and employment, Robinson remarks, would puzzle the twelve inspired Apostles. Your forefathers were determined to come out from a church, whose greatest grief appeared to be her amputation from Rome; and whose most anxious desire seemed to be an approximation to that idolatrous and apostate communion. The rites and ceremonies and innovations of the church, all conspired to render non-conformity justifiable.*

To escape the cruel persecution of the Star-Chamber, and court of High Commission, and the anathema-ising spirit of the arch-bigot Laud, who poured out his fury on all but papists; your pilgrim fathers left their homes, took their bibles, crossed the ocean, seated themselves on the New-England shores, and commenced the cultivation of the social and Christian charities.†

* The questioning of infants—consecration of places—bowing to the East, and at the name of Christ—using the sign of the cross—demanding sponsers and sprinkling infants—absolution of the sick, &c. &c. &c

† That the policy of Church and State was *intended* to harass and distress the consciences of men, is very evident from an examination of various measures of the times. The following anecdote is in point: When the Lord Chamberlain, Manchester, told the King, while the act of uniformity was under debate, that he was afraid the terms were so hard, that many of the late ministers could not comply with them; Bishop Sheldon being present, replied, "*I am afraid they will.*" See Dr. Bates' funeral sermon for Baxter.—Two thousand ministers parted with their living, and kept their consciences! So it appears that the ministers were more honest, than his Lordship supposed.

These ancestors of yours, were "a rare race of men, reared up for a rare purpose." We do not say too much, when we assert, that nature, education and grace, had conjoined to set on them the seal of superiority. They came—and I should marvel at their progress, settlement, and success, if I did not see his hand, who guides his chosen by "the right way," and if I did not hear a voice, which said to them, "this is the way, walk ye in it, fear not, for I am with ye."

But even in Zoar there was trouble and cause for lamentation; and the forefathers of this colony and town, soon felt themselves in the situation of ancient Israel, their pillar of cloud and fire was yet in advance, and they had to seek the place which God would give them for a home, and a shelter from the storm.

The idol of uniformity, on whose altar so many seas of blood in all ages have been spilt, was too soon erected in Massachusetts—but God caused the wrath of man to praise him, and we will not dwell upon so dark a spot in so fair a prospect.

However, it appears in that day of darkness, ROGER WILLIAMS and Dr. JOHN CLARK declared the grand truth, that "Jesus Christ is King in his own kingdom, and that no men have right to exercise authority in matters of conscience."*

Those able historians, Callender, Backus and Benedict, have recorded in detail, all the events connected with the settlement of the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations. It is sufficient on this occasion for me to state, that Roger Williams retired from Massachusetts to Seekonk, and after an amicable treaty with the lords of

* As a denomination, we owe much to Roger Williams—perhaps the debt would be best cancelled, by giving to the world a candid biography of this great and good man, whose singular fate it has been, to be called "an obstinate bigot," and "an inconstant man, yea, a weather-vane!"

the soil, settled at Moshausic, which he then called Providence. He was soon followed by his friend, Dr. John Clark, to whom he gave a kind reception. In 1637, Dr. Clark, with seventeen others,* by the aid of Roger Williams, obtained from the Indians a part of Aquedneck, or Rhode-Island.

Dr. Clark was a learned and intelligent man, and was instrumental in the constitution of the earliest religious body in this town, in 1644. This society remains to the present day, and is known as the first Baptist Church. The church was composed of twelve members, and received a very gradual increase. (See Appendix A.)

We are now come to those events, which led to the formation of this church, where for so many years, God hath recorded his name, and blessed his people—he is our God, and we will praise him! he is our fathers' God, and we will exalt him!

In 1656, some of the members of Dr. Clark's church became convinced of the importance of attending to what they conceived the scriptural doctrine of the imposition of hands, and regarded it as binding on all believers. This led to the secession of twenty-one members,† who immediately formed themselves into a separate church, under the name of the Second Baptist Church in Newport.

Their first pastor was the Rev. William Vaughan, who laboured with them twenty-one years, and died 1677. The second in the ministry, was the Rev. Thomas Baker, who removed to North-Kingstown, (R. I.) and there formed a church; he was succeeded by the Rev. John Harden, an Englishman, who

* William Coddington, John Clarke, William Hutchinson, John Coggeshall, William Aspinwall, Samuel Wilbore, John Porter, John Sandford, Edward Hutchinson, jun. Thomas Savage, William Dyre, William Freeborne, Philip Shearman, John Walker, Richard Carder, William Baulston, Edward Hutchinson, sen. and Henry Bull.

† William Vaughan, Thomas Baker, James Clark, Jeremiah Clark, Daniel Wightman, John Odlin, Jeremiah Weeden, Joseph Card, John Greenman, Henry Clark, Peleg Peckham, Joseph Weeden, John Rhodes, James Brown, John Hammett, William Rhodes, Daniel Sabear, Wm. Greenman, James Barker, S. Hookey and T. Peckham.

died in 1700. In 1697, the church erected their first building for public worship; the deed of the land is under date of October 23, 1697. Mr. Harden was followed by the Rev. James Clark, nephew to Dr. John Clark. His ordination took place in 1700, and the ministers from Providence officiated on the occasion; viz. Pardon Tillinghast, James Brown, and Gregory Dexter. In 1701, Jeremiah Clark was chosen deacon; and in 1704, he was assisted in the office by a colleague, John Odlin. Mr. Clark, it appears, was not alone in the service of the church, but had an associate, the Rev. Daniel Wightman, who was ordained in 1704. These good men were laborious, useful, and respected.

In 1706–7, the society rebuilt their meeting-house.

December 31, 1726, the church met and appointed a monthly church meeting, to be held for the regular discharge of business. It is to be lamented, that up to this period, the church had no regular records, and the opening of a book for the minutes of church transactions, was the commendable act of Mr. John Comer, who about this time united with the church, and of whom it is proper, that we take farther notice.

Mr. Comer was a native of Boston, and received religious instruction from the two Mathers; while pursuing his studies in the University, he joined the church at Cambridge, in 1720. Not long after, he was convinced of the propriety of believer's baptism by immersion, and united himself to the Baptist church at Boston, January 31, 1725. In May, 1726, we find him associate pastor of the first Baptist church in Newport; having as his colleague, the Rev. Mr. Peckham. Mr. Comer was the individual who introduced psalmody into the public worship of this town. A blessing attended his labours, and during his ministry of three years, the members of the church increased from seventeen to fifty-one. On Lord's day, November 17, 1728, Mr. Comer

preached a sermon, in which he maintained the doctrine of the imposition of hands on baptized believers. This discourse gave great offence to his colleague, and many of the brethren. Much excitement was the result, and the church postponed its stated season for communion. On the eighth of January, 1729, Mr. Comer applied to the church for a dismission, which, after explanation, he received; and he next united with this church, into which he was received by Mr. Wightman, by imposition of hands. As Mr. Clark was aged and infirm, Mr. Comer was invited to assist Mr. Wightman in his ministerial duties; and his faithful labours for two years, were eminently owned by God.

Just one hundred years ago, this church enjoyed a rich out-pouring of God's holy spirit; its state was truly flourishing, and about forty persons were brought to the knowledge of the truth, during the summer and fall of 1729. The number of members was one hundred and fifty.

Mr. Comer left the church, in order to visit other parts of the church of Christ, especially in Pennsylvania, and received a general letter of commendation for that purpose. He was a man of sound learning, and fervent piety, and a great benefactor to this society, which appears to have been edified by his ministrations. Mr. Clark died in 1736, aged eighty-seven years. Mr. Wightman was now assisted by the Rev. Nicholas Eyres, a native of Wilts, England. He was born August 22, 1691; and was educated in the city of Bristol. He came to Newport in 1731, and was ordained as co-pastor. In 1736, the church voted that it was their duty to take up quarterly collections for the poor, a practice which continues to this day.

In 1741, Joseph Sandford and Job Carr, were ordained deacons, by the pastors.

Mr. Wightman died in 1750, aged eighty-two years; and it is proper to record that he was a descendant of the last man, who suffered as a martyr in England, and who was put to death in 1612.

For some time, Mr. Eyres remained alone in the discharge of parochial duties; he was a man of very fine natural talents, and his scholastic acquirements were highly respectable. Mr. Eyres died February 13, 1759.*

We are now to speak of that venerable man of God, who for so many years was connected with this society, and who yet lives in the fond remembrance of many in this assembly, who received instruction from his lips. Gardner Thurston, the son of Edward and Elizabeth Thurston, was born November 14, 1721. In early life he was brought, by sovereign grace, to feel that he was a ruined sinner, and to seek salvation through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was baptized by Mr. Eyres, April 4, 1741. In 1748, in the

* A monument erected to his memory, bears the following inscription:

"From an early institution in the languages,
And mathematical learning,
He proceeded to the study of the sacred scriptures,
And from them alone derived
The true Christian science,
Of the recovery of man
To virtue and happiness.
This he explained in his pastoral instructions;
This he happily recommended in his own example
Of gravity, piety, and unblemished morals.
Like his Divine Master
In his daily visitations,
He went about doing good.
He was a friend to the virtuous of every denomination,
But a foe to established error and superstition;
An enemy to unscriptural claims of superiority
Among the churches of our common Lord;
But of Protestant liberty and the rights of conscience,
An able and steady defender.
From these distinguishing features,
And ruling principles of his character,
Posterity may know,
Or at least have reason to judge,
That while many monumental inscriptions,
Perpetuate the names of those,
Who will awake to shame and everlasting contempt,
This stone transmits the memory of one,
Who shall shine as the brightness of the firmament,
And as the stars forever and ever."

27th year of his age, he was called by this church to the work of the Christian ministry, and became assistant to Mr. Eyres, till his death, when the church invited him to become its pastor; and April 29, 1759, he was solemnly ordained and set apart as a bishop. The presbytery that assisted on the occasion, were the Rev. Job Mason, of Swanzey, who gave the right hand of fellowship: the Rev. Russel Mason, who preached the sermon from Romans x. 15: "How shall they preach except they be sent?" and the Rev. Charles Holden, of Warwick, who gave the charge.

The most important event in the history of the church, under the early administration of Mr. Thurston, was the controversy which so long agitated its members, respecting the introduction of singing in the public worship of God. Perhaps the fashions of this world do not change more entirely, than the opinions of men. That part of our devotion, which in this house is so beautifully and judiciously conducted, and which tends so much to animate pious feelings, was once most strenuously opposed, as savoring too strongly of the abominations of mystical Babylon. In 1764, efforts were made to introduce psalmody, and numerous church meetings were called for the purpose, without accomplishing the object. October 4, 1764, a committee was appointed "to ascertain the minds of the brethren in general, concerning singing praise to God in the church."

At last, April 18, 1765, "a church meeting was held, at which twenty-seven brethren attended; eighteen gave it as their mind to sing praise to God every public meeting day. Five gave it as their mind to sing at fifth day meetings, and two gave their voice against it at any time. So we concluded to sing praise to God on all days of public worship, and to sing such psalms or hymns as the minister shall direct."

1769, Ezekiel Burroughs, James Barker, and William Tilley, were ordained deacons.

July 4, 1771, William Rogers, a member of the church, was licensed to preach the gospel. You are aware of the eminence at which Dr. Rogers arrived in his profession, as a divine, and his respectability as a man of letters; and it is interesting to reflect, that this was the fountain, which sent out a stream, so instrumental in making glad the city of God.

1774, Stephen Peckham was ordained deacon.

Mr. Peleg Burroughs, was licensed as a preacher, by the church, who deemed him to be possessed of gifts which qualified him for the Christian ministry. He afterwards removed to the church at Tiverton, (R. I.)

Mr. John Jones was also licensed at this time to preach; of whom no farther record is found.

In 1776, the church received from the executors of John Tillinghast, Esq. one hundred Spanish milled dollars, as a legacy, "to be improved for the use of the ministry of said church."

When the difficulties of the Revolutionary contest began to affect this town and Island, the clergymen removed, with the exception of Mr. Thurston and the Sabbatarian minister. Mr. Thurston preached to a large audience, and when this house became the hospital and barracks for the army, he officiated in the Trinity Church.

In 1783, Jethro Briggs was ordained deacon.

Early in 1794, Mr. Thurston applied to his people, to procure him aid in the discharge of his duties; and for some months he was assisted in the pulpit by the Rev. Thomas Dunn.

After this, the desk was often supplied by Br. W. Peckham, a member of the church. Mr. P. has been, for a number of years, the venerated pastor of the Tiverton church; and his labours down to his latest days, are crowned with great success.

In 1799, Mr. Thurston received assistance from the Rev. William Collier, now of Boston. October 30, 1800, the church voted to unite with the corporation in choice of the minister.

The infirmities of age became so pressing, that Mr. Thurston earnestly besought his people to obtain a pastor, and release him from his station.—On the thirteenth of May, 1801, the good man was gratified in his desire; and the Rev. Joshua Bradley was ordained to the pastoral care of the church.

September 5, 1801, the church passed a unanimous vote to unite with the Warren Association at its next anniversary, to be held with the church at Sutton; and appointed as its delegates, the pastor and Samuel Barker.

May 23, 1802, Mr. Thurston departed this life, in the eighty-second year of his age. From a paper in his own hand-writing, I have obtained the following information, respecting his long and faithful ministry. From August, 1759, to 1801, he baptized three hundred and twenty-eight persons, and married eleven hundred and fourteen couple. He assisted at the ordination of the following ministers, viz. John Mason, Erasmus Kelley, and Peleg Burroughs. With regard to other ordinations, he says, in a letter to a clergyman, "I have been repeatedly solicited to attend, but have declined, not feeling at liberty to give a minister a solemn charge with regard to his duty, unless the people would discharge theirs, which they do most cruelly neglect." His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Gano, from Rev. ii. 10, "Be thou faithful unto death," &c.

1802, Samuel Barker was ordained deacon.

1803, Gideon J. Babcock and William Card, were ordained deacons.

The earliest labours of Mr. Bradley, were rendered the means of attracting multitudes to the house of God; and he soon had the satisfaction of

receiving many as members of the church. In July, 1803, he baptized Mr. Bela Jacobs, who is now the beloved and successful pastor of the church at Cambridgeport, (Mass.) The years 1805 and 1806, were characterized by a blessed work of Divine grace in this town, in which this congregation largely participated. Prayer meetings were multiplied, souls were converted, and numbers commenced their spiritual pilgrimage.

September 9 and 10, 1806, this church enjoyed the high satisfaction of receiving, for the first time, the Warren Association; the introductory sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Baldwin, from first Thess. v. 12, 13: "And we beseech you brethren," &c. Dr. Gano was chosen Moderator, and Dr. Baldwin, Clerk. The circular letter, upon regeneration, was written by Mr. Bradley. Sermons were delivered by brother Wilson, from Matth. xvi. 18; by brother Clay, from Amos iv. 12; by brother Andrews, from Jude 21; by brother Rogers, from Is. xxviii. 16; by brother Batcheller, from Eccl. xii. 13. This church reported ninety-six added that year by baptism; her whole number, two hundred and fifty-nine.

On October 17, 1806, the church held a meeting at Jamestown, by previous appointment, for the purpose of ordaining to the work of the ministry, Mr. Gershom Lane, and on that occasion Mr. Bradley preached a sermon.

May 4, 1807, the church licensed brother Gorton Anderson, as a preacher of the gospel; and he preached his first sermon in this house, from "Behold, I bring unto you glad tidings."

March 22, 1807, Mr. Bradley removed, to the grief of a people, who valued him for his works' sake—he removed to Connecticut, and has since had various settlements in the church of Christ; and is at present in the western country, on the banks of the Mississippi.

October 29, 1807, Rev. J. B. Gibson became the pastor of the church; under his administration, additions were often made.

September 2, 1810, William Taggart and William W. Vernon were ordained deacons, with the assistance of sister churches.

March 26, 1815, Mr. Gibson asked, and received a letter of dismission, and ceased to be its pastor.

Sept. 1, 1815, Rev. Samuel Wydown became the stated minister, he remained till 1817. In the beginning of this year the church applied to the Rev. Mr. Elton, to become their pastor. On the 22d of February he accepted the call, and on the 11th of June was ordained to the pastorship of the church, by a Council convened for that purpose. The sermon was delivered by the Rev. James M. Winchell, from II Cor. ii. 16, "Who is sufficient for these things?" The charge was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Gano; the ordaining prayer by the Rev. Job Borden.

August 5, 1817, the church licensed Mr. B. H. Pitman as a minister of the gospel.

The summer of 1820 was rendered memorable to many as the period of an extraordinary ingathering to the church. One hundred and two were added by baptism.

September 10, 11, 1821. The Warren Association met here. The introductory sermon was preached by the Rev. David Benedict, from Prov. xxiii. 23; "Buy the truth and sell it not." Dr. Gano was chosen Moderator, and Rev. J. Barnaby, Clerk. Sermons were preached by brethren Going, Gammell (from Isai. xliii. 13) Rice (from John xvii. 4) and Parkhurst.

December 22, 1822. To the grief of an affectionate people, Mr. Elton requested a dismission, from his church, in order to become pastor of the church at Windsor, Vt. Mr. Elton is now Professor of the Learned Languages in Brown University.

The attention of the Society was immediately turned to the Rev. Wm. Gammell, pastor of the church at Medfield. Mr. Gammell visited Newport in June, and on the 19th, the church and congregation presented him with a unanimous call to become their spiritual guide. July 20, a letter was received from him, accepting their invitation. Sept. 7 he joined this church by letter and relation of his Christian experience, and became its pastor, and his installation occurred Dec. 10, 1823. The minutes of the Council are unfortunately lost.

The ministry of Mr. Gammell constitutes an era in the history of this Society. He produced an immediate impression upon the opinion of his audience, and soon witnessed a most gratifying increase of stated hearers, while multitudes evinced the pleasure with which they became the occasional occupants of these pews. In this retrospect of by gone days, you perceive I have taken no notice of the feuds and differences which so frequently prevailed, and at some periods threatened you with ruin and desolation. I know the topic would be painful, and its discussion useless.

These difficulties have generally originated in trifles. But you have learned that union is strength. The labours of Mr. Gammell were blessed by God principally to the attainment of two important objects; the establishment of peace in the church, and the decided increase of a congregation which had always been large. His ministry was rendered instrumental to the conversion of a few; but had he been spared, probably many would have called him blessed.* (See Appendix B.)

At the Warren Association in 1824, it was voted, "That we earnestly recommend to the churches of this Association, that a library be collected in every

* Members have recently been added to the church, who ascribe the origin of their serious impressions to Mr. G's ministry.

church, for the benefit of the minister and members."

Shortly after this, a letter was received from Mr. R. Rogers, with a number of very valuable books, as a donation to serve as the commencement of a church library. To this catalogue, many recent additions have been made, and we have now a library of nearly 150 volumes.

In the early part of 1827, this Society received a valuable legacy from Constant Taber, Esq. who had for a number of years been a steady friend to the interests of the church and congregation. His will was made in 1817. He then made large bequests to the Society, and in 1826, on the death of his wife, he by a codicil enlarged his original munificence, and constituted the corporation his residuary legatee. His dwelling he left as a parsonage house, and devoted one thousand dollars for the use of the poor of the church, at the discretion of the minister and deacons.*

The validity of Judge Taber's will and codicil was decided before the Court of Probate, and ultimately by the Supreme Judicial Court of the State.

On the 31st of May you were suddenly deprived of a beloved pastor.

I am now to speak of those events upon which it is becoming that I consult brevity. My first services with you were on the 17th of June, 1827, and after remaining with you a few weeks, I accepted the unanimous call of the church and congregation. The 27th of September was mutually agreed upon for the ordination. At an Ecclesiastical Council, which you convened for the purpose, the service was performed in the following manner: Mr. Perry read the scriptures and prayed; Dr. Gano preached the

* Judge Taber also left legacies to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions and to the Home Missionary Society of the R. Island Baptist State Convention.

sermon from Acts xx. 24, "None of these things move me," &c.; Mr. Benedict delivered the charge; Mr. Welsh offered up the ordination prayer; Mr. Shurtliff gave the right hand of fellowship; Mr. Pease addressed the church and society; and Mr. Gale concluded the exercises by prayer.

This year, Sandford Bell, Nathaniel Sweet and Abner Peckham were chosen deacons.

The summer of 1828, we all of us remember. It was one of those seasons upon which memory loves to dwell, and the return of such a period is the object of our fondest anticipations. God was with us of a truth; we often saw with the eye of faith One in our assembly, whose form was like unto the form of the Son of Man. And more than fifty testified that he had power on earth to forgive sins.

And here I cannot forbear to express my gratitude to God, that in the additions which we then received, we still have sources of unmingled joy and satisfaction. We see them at our solemn feasts, meet them in the ways of Zion, and hope to behold them at last perfect before God.

I believe, my hearers, that you feel with me, that our morning's task is solemn and interesting. I feel, I trust, the force of this text, "other men have laboured, and ye have entered into their labours." And do not you feel ready to say, "God hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad; lo this God shall be our God even unto death; he shall guide us by his counsel till he bring us to his glory." May God fasten such impressions on our hearts, and cause them to produce suitable effects in our lives and tempers!

Do you not love to think what a number of immortals, during the period of one hundred and seventy-three years, have found this church a nursery for heaven? More than 1250 persons, members of this church, are now in another state.—I love to think that of a large multitude of these, Jesus shall say, "They are mine." I love to think of the day

when their expectations shall be realized; when God's purposes shall be accomplished, and when we shall see their feet standing and their spirits rejoicing on the Mount Zion of God.

But how many of the good men who formerly composed this church, would be pained, (if pain could enter heaven,) to see those who bear their names and fill their places upon earth, neglecting the great salvation, and even wanting the form of godliness. With some before me, it is high time that they awake from their apathy on religious subjects, and become imitators of their worthy ancestors, who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises.

I would ask the members of this church seriously to examine themselves, in order to ascertain if under various administrations of the gospel of grace, they are really growing in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ? Has your faith been increased—your hope brightened—your love inflamed? Do you abound in good works? Are you found in the discharge of all the relative duties which devolve upon you in the closet, the family, the church and the world.

The church of God in the present day has her station on commanding heights, and her prospects are more plain and glorious than in former ages. She is commanded to lift up her eyes and behold the world white to the harvest; and my beloved brethren, let us unite our energies with other churches in striving to propagate the gospel of Christ. In this sacred task I pray you to remember that you are in holy fellowship; you become co-workers with the noble army of prophets, the goodly company of apostles—you unite in purpose with the glorious Redeemer, and you imitate the God of heaven himself.

If you feel thankful at the remembrance of God's goodness in raising up for you a succession of pastors and teachers, O shew your gratitude by afford-

ing your prayers and support to the schools of the prophets. If vain complaints of the inutility of Colleges and Theological institutions were but superceded by fervent prayers that God would pour out his Spirit upon them, would it not be a blessed exchange? Let us pray and labour that in our denomination the ministry may be characterized by acknowledged piety and general information.

I cannot but congratulate you as a church and society, on the sweet peace which we are permitted to enjoy. Let our "camp" be marked by union, our "house" by brotherly love. Long may we be able with satisfaction to say to beholders, "Go round about Zion, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following"!

The aim of the gospel ministry is to present "every man perfect in Christ Jesus." I greatly fear some of my dear hearers have never yet received the Saviour! The gospel has hitherto been only a savor of death unto death. You have had line upon line and precept upon precept, from one messenger after another; and the Master says, "What could I have done for you that I have not done?"

I feel much for your condition. You have heard much and thought but little of Jesus. I feel for you when I think of the march of death through this congregation. *There*, when I came, sat youth and health; and *there*, sat intelligence and virtue; and *there*, I saw the hope of heaven on the brow; and *there*, alas, but too much thoughtlessness of life's great end; and all, all hath passed into the silence of the grave!

I see the king of terrors yet in our assembly; and I fear lest his sudden and sad summons should agonize your hearts before you have listened to my message. O, "I beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vain."

APPENDIX.

A.

The first remarkable difficulty the church met with, was the unhappy spirit of persecution which prevailed in Boston; under the sharp resentments of which, fell three of the members, viz. Mr. John Clark, Pastor; Obadiah Holmes, and John Crandall, who were taken up on Lord's day, July 20, 1651, at the house of one of the brethren, whom they went to visit, viz. William Witter, in the town of Lynn. While Mr. Clark was preaching from Rev. iii. 10, he was arrested by two constables, by virtue of a warrant from Mr. Robert Bridges, Justice of the Peace: and on the 22d of the same month, were committed to prison at Boston; and on the 31st of the same month, at the Court of Assistants, at Boston, they were, by order of Court, signed by Increase Noel, Secretary, (only and alone for conscience towards God, in dissenting from the received principles of the church of New-England, respecting infant baptism) sentenced Mr. John Clark to pay twenty pounds, or be severely whipped; Mr. Obadiah Holmes thirty pounds, or be severely whipped; and Mr. John Crandall, five pounds, or be whipped. By some means or other, none suffered but Mr. Holmes, (not as an evil doer) thirty stripes, with the most imaginable severity. This was done under the administration of Mr. John Endicott, Governor.

Extracted from the Church records of 1st Baptist Society, Newport.

B.

The following is an obituary notice which was drawn up by a Minister in this State.—It appeared originally in the Messenger for February 22, 1828.

The Rev. William Gammell was born in Boston, Jan. 9, 1786. In early life he made a profession of religion, and united with the First Baptist church in that city, then under the pastoral care of the late Dr. Stillman. At about the age of nineteen, he commenced a course of studies with Rev. Mr. Williams, of Wrentham, and soon after, he received a license from his church to engage in those ministerial labours in which, for about twenty years, he held a distinguished rank among his associates.

So early and so great was his promise as a preacher, that he was soon called off from his studies, to supply the frequent calls from the neighbouring vacant churches, a circumstance which he ever afterwards regretted; and the same year in which he was licensed, he accepted the invitation of the church in Bellingham, a town adjoining

Wrentham, to become their pastor. Here he continued about four years, when he removed to Medfield, where the most of his ministerial services were performed. In this situation his field of labour was very extensive; his congregation spread into a number of the surrounding towns, and his duties were indeed arduous and severe.

Having had a desire for a number of years of being located in a situation where his labours would be confined within a narrower compass, and some circumstances having transpired to make his continuance in this place less desirable than it formerly had been, he in 1823 accepted the invitation of the Second Baptist Church and Congregation in Newport, R. I. to become their pastor, and to this new scene of labour he repaired in September of that year. Although mostly confined to the limited precincts of an insular situation in his new location, yet an ample field of labour was opened before him; and being in the vigour of life, with powers of uncommon efficiency both of body and mind, he entered it with ardour and delight. This ancient and populous congregation had suffered some diminution from the frequent changes in its ministry, and the injurious suspensions of regular supplies, but his commanding talents soon replenished their capacious house, and filled it often to overflowing. Besides the settled inhabitants of the town of other communities, visiting strangers, with which, in the milder seasons it abounds, showed by their frequent attention to his ministry, his growing estimation in the public mind, and the satisfaction they derived from the plain, pungent and scriptural eloquence of his pulpit discourses. The stand which he took in this town, and indeed in the State at large among all denominations, was unusually good, and all were anxious on public occasions of a general nature, to procure his acceptable services. But a mysterious Providence saw fit to cut him off in the midst of his days, and almost in the beginning of his career, in his new and extensive field of labour, under circumstances calculated to spread a gloom of no common density over a wide circle of friends and associates, and to produce disappointment and derangement throughout all the connexions nd engagements of his active life.

Mr. Gammell's most distinguished talent lay in preaching; and he generally rose to the highest point in the pulpit upon themes of a doctrinal nature, which admit of a practical application to the hearts and lives of Christians. Although he made no pretensions to learning, in the higher sense of that term, yet his performances were seldom unacceptable on this account, to men of the greatest literary acquirements. He had acquired the art of confining himself to his own language, and adopting a style purely English, and of course acceptable to all classes of his hearers. Our departed friend excelled in his extemporaneous performances. So abundant was the vocabulary deposited in his memory, that he was seldom at a loss for words; he would express

himself with the greatest ease, and apparently to his own satisfaction, on all occasions, whether in the pulpit or deliberative assembly, without any previous preparation. This happy employment he often turned to the best account, in seasons of the most embarrassing nature, as many of his intimate friends will easily recollect. He could indeed write well, as some of his published discourses will show, but there was an unction and pathos, accompanied with an interesting personal appearance, which could not be transfused into his written communications.

These appendages of public speaking, as Campbell says of certain peculiarities of language, are like essences, which cannot be turned from one vessel to another without suffering a loss. His voice was sonorous and commanding; in his gestures he was easy and unaffected, and rather sparing than redundant, and so much did he excel on public occasions, that he was selected unusually frequent at Associations, and anniversaries of different kinds, as the principal performer; for he was sure to be heard, and that with attention, however numerous was his congregation.

In his doctrinal sentiments, Mr. Gammell was what may be denominated sound, in the proper orthodox sense of that term; on those points of modern controversy respecting the condition of our fallen race, the plan of salvation, the influence of the Holy Spirit, and the Deity of the Redeemer, he assumed on all occasions, a position so bold and perspicuous, that none could be at a loss to understand precisely his opinions. His friends had the fullest confidence in his integrity and stability, while those who differed from him in his theological constructions, conceded to him, the character of honesty and fairness; often listened to his discourses, with a deep and interested attention, on account of the fervent and workman-like manner with which they were exhibited; and if they were not converted to his views, they were convinced of his sincerity and ability.

To his denominational friends, he was true to a proverb, although his intercourse with other Christians was affable and familiar. He could indeed discover, and did not hesitate to acknowledge, the superiority of some other communities over his own in point of numbers, talents and wisdom of management; but still never did he exhibit any disposition to compromise the distinguishing sentiments of his religious connexion, however unpopular they might be; or shun to avow his decided attachment to them.

For a number of years previous to his removal into this State, and up to the time of his death, our lamented friend was a member of the corporation of Brown University, and as all his associates in that department will testify, he was a very active and efficient member of that body, in times of its greatest trial and embarrassment.

Mr. Gammell was by nature formed for decision and action; and when once his purpose was fixed, no common impediments could divert him from his course; and it happened with him, as it generally does with men of this character, that while his friends rallied around him with confidence and affection, his opponents were equally strong and ardent in their feelings against him, for they well understood that the reaction of his efforts would fall upon them with all the force he could command; and that he would do all in his power, by all the fair and honourable means which his sagacity and industry could bring into action, to establish his principles and consummate his plans. But notwithstanding some peculiar traits of character of this kind, his friends have the consolation of believing, that he went down suddenly into the grave, leaving but a very few behind him, who did not sincerely lament his early exit.

The circumstances of the death of Mr. Gammell were exceedingly afflictive and alarming; he had spent the day as usual in his domestic and parochial avocations, and had lately returned from visiting the mansion house of the late Judge Taber, which with other liberal bequests of that munificent friend of this community, had lately become their property, and to which their pastor proposed soon to remove, little expecting so soon to be called to a house not made with hands. So suddenly was he called away, that his Church, who had assembled for a social meeting near to his house, after waiting a while for his coming, sent to inquire the reason of his delay, when for the first time, they received the distressing intelligence of his death. From his observations, to his family and friends, which were afterwards recollected, it was evident that he felt that the hand of death was upon him from the first of his illness; but that he expected to survive, at least, till the coming day. So far as he was able to express his views of religion and eternity, they were strong and consoling; but soon the fatal paralysis renewed its rapid work of revulsion and disorder, and about the going down of the sun, terminated his earthly career, on the 31st of May, 1827, in the 42d year of his age.

His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Wayland, of Brown University, from John vi. 20; *But he saith unto them, it is I, be not afraid.* As might be expected, the assembly was unusually large and solemn, and the discourse very interesting and appropriate.

Soon after these sad solemnities were performed, and while the minds of all were full of tenderness and affection, a subscription was commenced for the benefit of the bereaved family. Many gentlemen of the town, of other perauasions, readily entered their names with liberal donations, and with some aid from a few other places, 900 dollars in a short time were raised: with this sum, in the low condition of real estate in the town, a comfortable and commodious house was pur-

chased and secured to the family. Among our denomination this is a new method of testifying our respect for the departed servants of the Lord, and it is one which, it is hoped, will prevail. It gives substantial proof of the good will of those surviving friends to those whom their ministers leave behind them, often in circumstances of pitiful dependence. Could ministers generally calculate on this benevolent course, it would in a great measure relieve that painful solicitude which they too often have occasion to feel for the future welfare of those dear objects of their affection, for whom, from the scantiness of their resources, they do but barely provide a subsistence, while they are spared to exercise towards them their paternal care and protection. The sums thus raised come from so many benefactors, that they are never felt by the individuals who join in the charity, but when consolidated, they will save an afflicted family from destitution and distress.

Mr. Gammell was twice married. His first wife was Mary Slocum, of Bellingham, the place of his first settlement in the ministry. His second was Maria A. Maddy, of Wrentham, who, with six children survive him to mourn his loss.

Mr. Gammell's personal appearance was bold and engaging; his countenence was ruddy and healthful, and the general impression was that his constitution was unusually good; which his friends, however, now assure us was not the case; but that his vital misgivings were often such, as to lead him to anticipate an early and sudden death. And it was probably owing in part to these impressions, as well as to his views of duty as a Christian, that his house in all points of view, was constantly kept in order, and ready to be left at the shortest notice.

He lived by system, in all his secular as well as spiritual concerns, and had his eye continually fixed on that better world, into which, we trust, he has been admitted eternally to remain.

> "His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
> And bids earth roll, nor feels its idle whirl."

A

SERMON

DELIVERED AT THE

DEDICATION

OF THE

COLLEGE CHAPEL

IN AMHERST, MASS.

FEB. 28, 1827.

BY HEMAN HUMPHREY, D. D.
PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE.

Published at the request of the Students.

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DEDICATION SERMON.

1 SAMUEL, VII. 12.

– – – – – HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US.

WHETHER this touching acknowledgement was actually inscribed by Samuel, upon the stone which he had hastily set up on the battle-ground between Mispeh and Shen, does not appear from the laconic notice of that signal deliverance which it records. It will however always stand on the sacred page, in glorious contrast with the inflated, not to say atheistical bulletins and inscriptions of the most renowned Cæsars, whether ancient or modern. But in the Book of God it does not stand alone. It is associated with the *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us*, of such illustrious statesmen and warriors as Moses, Daniel, Joshua, and David. Would that we could find a thousand more such pious memorials of national deliverances. Would that every great captain had a cause as righteous, as that which summoned the chosen tribes to Mispeh; and that every deliverer of his country, knew how to brighten his laurels, by writing upon the decisive spot, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." The few instances of

this sort which occur, and are "far between," afford some little relief to the eye of the christian patriot, on the dark ground work of militant ages; and happy would he be, if while his ear is every where persecuted by the clash of arms, he could discover more and brighter glimmers to cheer him through centuries of night.

But let it not be thought, that the conquered and cannon-ploughed field, is the only spot on which the helping arm of God is to be acknowledged, or that none but great and critical occasions, demand the pious record of the heart, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." This inscription like the Bible, the light, and the air, is common property. It belongs to all mankind. No one is so independent as not to need God's help. And no one is so forsaken as not to be in a measure protected and sustained by it. Let the pious king then, when his enemies are scattered, inscribe our text upon the pillars of his throne. Let the defender of his father's sepulchre, engrave it upon his shield. Let the men of active business and honest gains, write it upon their ships, upon their manufactories, and in their counting-rooms, at the corner of every street, and at the entrance of every field. Let the student, as he advances from stage to stage in his education, record it upon every blank leaf of his classics. Let the christian pilgrim leave it upon every way-mark of his journey. In a word, let all, "both high and low, rich and poor together," cherish a grateful sense of their dependence, and ever be ready to say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." O how will

the guilty and sorrow-worn face of an outcast world be lighted up with christian loveliness, in that fast coming day when the inscription of the holy Seer of Rama, shall be engraved on every heart and break from every tongue!

The text thus introduced, suggests a number of interesting topics for our present consideration.

The *first* of these is, that without God we can do nothing. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." We cannot brace a muscle or draw a breath without him. But for his unremitting care and mysterious energy, the "wheel would be broken at the cistern," and the perennial stream of life would congeal in an hour, through all its channels. The vital impulse of this living machine, so "fearfully and wonderfully made," would cease, and death would come in to take it rudely down and lay it away out of sight. It is God who prevents it, who keeps every chord in tune; every valve in repair; every spring and wheel in motion.

And as we are at this moment dependent upon Him for life and breath and all things, so we always have been. Why died we not in the cradle? It was because God sustained us. He cherished the spark, which his own breath had kindled, while as yet it had scarcely begun to warm our infant bosoms. In childhood, so beset with dangers, in youth so reckless of evil, in the noon of life, and in its winter eventide so bleak; in every slippery path, in all our toils, adversities, perils, and escapes, God has been our preserver. "Having obtained help of Him we continue unto this day." But for this, the

last fever would have dried up all the fountains of life within us; the last ague would have shaken us to pieces.

If we have not like many others yielded in the hour of temptation, so as to break, or sadden every heart that cared for us—if we have not become drunkards, and vagabonds, and are not "cast out an abhoring to all flesh," it is because the Lord hath prevented us. "Who maketh thee to differ from another, or what hast thou which thou hast not received?"

Art thou my beloved hearer, a disciple of Christ? Once thou wast led captive by Satan at his will, and we saw thee ignominiously 'grinding in his prison house.' Blind and in chains as thou wast, why didst thou not die there? Who unbarred the gate, and struck off thy fetters, and brought thee out? Could any finite arm have done it? And since this great spiritual deliverance, who hath sustained thee in the hour of trial, and kept thee "back from presumptuous sins?" Why have not all thy vows been broken, and all thy best resolutions been given to the winds? Why hast thou not utterly departed from God and "crucified his son afresh?" I know what answer thou wilt give, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped me."

Is thine eye, beaming with hope and faith, lifted to heaven as thine eternal home, and shouldst thou a moment after death find thyself in the temple of God, with the "general assembly and church of the first born, and an innumerable company of angels," to whom wilt thou give the glory of "so

great salvation?" Certainly to him that "sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever."

If now, from individual christians we turn to the church, and find her strong in weakness, safe in the sea and the fire, gathering her daily harvest of manna in the wilderness, fording Jordan without wetting the sole of her foot, walking unhurt in the furnace, singing in prison, quenching the fiercest flames of persecution with her blood, coming out of great tribulation with her strength renewed, and her garments white, and surviving all her oppressors; —if we find her thus, and listen to her song, the swelling, thrilling strain will ever be "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me." For what is yet to come in her militant state, she relies not on herself, but the power of her King, and when she shall finally come up out of the wilderness, she will still be seen "leaning upon her beloved." At the gate of heaven she will shout, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me," and then the echo will be lost in her eternal song.

But is the *church* more dependent on God for help, than those are who associate for any important purpose? Who can go forward without him? Who can say "mine own arm hath gotten me the victory?" Who in carrying forward any enterprize of great public utility can, without "robbing God," take the glory to himself?

Secondly: It is the prerogative of God to afford help in his own appointed way, and in his own good time.

He does it in his own way. And he has not seen fit to bind himself to one invariable method of ope-

ration. Sometimes his agency appears in one form and sometimes in another. During more than four thousand years from the creation, many of the deliverances which he wrought for his people were miraculous; and his immediate agency was scarcely less obvious in others. Thus, for their sakes, Egypt was desolated by his plagues; the waters of the sea stood up in walls to give them a dry passage; the Philistines were chased by his thunders; and the Assyrians were smitten by his angel. At one time we see Daniel coming unhurt out of a den of hungry lions; at another, his three friends emerging safe from Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace; and at another the doors of a prison opened by an earthquake. Moses smites the rock and the waters gush out; Joshua speaks to the sun and moon and they stand still in the heavens. Elijah prays and the hostile captains with their fifties are burnt up by fire from heaven,—again he prays and the sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones of the altar, are miraculously consumed together. Elisha also prays and a whole army are smitten with blindness—he prays again and their eyes are opened. Moses lives forty days and nights without food; the persecuted Tishbite is fed by ravens, and girded with more than mortal strength, the son of Manoah snaps the Philistines' new ropes and withes, and crushes them by thousands beneath the ruins of their temple.

But miracles having answered the end for which the were designed, are not now to be expected or prayed for. We look not for manna from heaven, nor for water from a flint, nor for the gifts of tongues

and of healing. Nor do we stop to inquire why these gifts have been withdrawn.

It is worthy of remark, however, that it never was God's ordinary method to help, or deliver his people by miracles. It was only on great and worthy occasions, that he came forth from the secret of his pavillion, and put aside those second causes in which ordinarily was the "hiding of his power." Thus when the Tabernacle was to be erected, he assigned the work to Bezaleel and Aholiab, and prepared them for it by giving them "wisdom and knowledge in all manner of workmanship,—to devise cunning works, to work in gold and silver and brass; in cutting of stones to set, and in carving of timber." So when the Temple was to be built, Hiram was raised up, was endowed with extraordinary skill for the work, and was secretly influenced to give his assistance. In like manner, when after the Babylonish captivity, the holy city and temple were to be rebuilt, and the poor captives had not the means even of returning to their own land, instead of carrying them back by a miracle, or taking the great work out of their hands, God influenced Cyrus to give them the most efficient aid and encouragement; and strengthened them according to the magnitude of the undertaking.

In all this, so far as I am able to judge, there was nothing materially different from what takes place in our own times. If God now draws the veil a little closer over his own mighty efficiency, there is no diminution of power, no deficiency of help, no want of qualified instruments, nor of instan-

ces in which the minds of men are swayed by a secret and divine impulse.

It should always be kept in mind, however, that in the aid which he affords, God interferes not with the physical laws of the Universe, nor with the fundamental laws of mind. He does nothing to render human forethought needless, nothing to encourage idleness, nothing to interfere with voluntary and accountable agency. Certain it is that God made man to act, and to act freely while he is acted upon—to help himself at the same moment that he is receiving aid from his Maker. How different this exercise of power from that which plumes the insect, heaves the billows, and rolls the heavens.

Whether, as some eminent theologians have believed and taught, the subjects of a saving change by the Spirit of God are active in the very moment of regeneration, as well as before and after, we have not time to inquire, nor is the decision of this question, at all essential to the present argument. The simple question *now* before us is, how, or in what way does God aid mankind in the duties of their respective callings; but more *especially*, in devising and executing plans for the public good? Is it by taking the work out of their hands? Is it by furnishing them with plans already matured, so as to excuse them from thought and invention? Or is it by enlightening their minds, by endowing them with skill to plan, strength to execute, and courage to go forward — by removing obstacles and securing to them all needful co-operation? I need not wait a moment for your answer. Every one will

say, that however important, or difficult an enterprize may be, we have no right to expect help from God, unless we enter heartily into the work ourselves; and how much less in the common affairs of life. God will never plough and sow the field of the sluggard, while he stands looking on with his arms folded, nor work a miracle to feed and clothe his family. He must shake off his sloth, and put his hand to the plough, or rags and famine will teach him a lesson not soon to be forgotten. So in aiding men to clear up the wilderness, to construct roads and bridges, to build up cities, and to found colleges, God adapts his assistance to the capacities of intelligent, moral and active beings.

True though it be, that they can do nothing without him, it is equally true, that he will not move a stone, nor furnish a plank, nor fell a tree for them. In like manner, if our mortal life is to be prolonged, or our souls are to be saved, or the church is to live, or the heathen nations are to be christianized, the means which infinite wisdom has appointed for these ends must be used; and it is only when they are faithfully used, that divine co-operation can be expected. God treats us, not as machines without power, without will, and without responsibility; but as rational and accountable agents. As such we have important parts to act, and upon this condition, we are encouraged to look to him for help in every emergency.

This leads me to observe, that God exercises his indisputable prerogative in regard to the *time*, as well as to the *way* of granting assistance. Some-

times he appears in the first moment of danger, or perplexity. He dissipates the storm while it is yet gathering. He anticipates the fierce onset of the tempest, by taking off its wings. He points out the way of deliverance, ere the peril is seen in its full magnitude. He raises up friends before we perceive how much we need them. But this does not accord with the general experience of those, who in the end feel themselves most deeply indebted to God for his help. He more commonly defers till danger presses hard—till their way is hedged up—till they know not what to do. And thus does he prepare them for the succour, which lingers only, that they may realize how much they need it. Thus was it with the Hebrews when the wilderness had shut them in. The Red Sea was before them, impassable mountains stood up on either hand, and the Egyptian host pressed hard upon their rear. Thus it was with the same people, when that great victory which our text so concisely but emphatically records, was sent for their deliverance. Thus it was with David when he was "hunted like a partridge upon the mountains," and exclaimed in his extremity, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul." Thus with Asa, and thus with Hezekiah: and thus has it been with the church and individual christians in all ages. When troubles have compassed them about as waters, and they have sent up their cries to heaven, God has often delayed coming out of his place for their help, till they have been ready to fear that "his mercies were clean gone forever," and then he has stretched out his arm at the

very moment which was best suited to humble them, and glorify himself. So when he is coming "in the greatness of his strength" for their help, how often does he hide his mercies amid the 'clouds and darkness that surround him.' Every event seems to be adverse, and every movement of providence retrograde.

"All these things are against me," said the aged and afflicted Patriarch, when his sons came back from Egypt, having left Simeon bound as a prisoner of state, and communicated to him the demand of the prime minister for his beloved Benjamin; but how surprisingly must his views have been changed, when at their next return, he saw the waggons! All these things are against us, thought Martha and Mary, when, in the extremity of their brother's sickness, the messengers returned without Jesus, and they followed Lazarus to the tomb four days before his arrival. But how must they have felt their unbelief rebuked, when in obedience to the call of Christ, Lazarus came up out of his grave. "All these things are against me," hath the church often been ready to exclaim, when the fire was taking away her dross, and 'all things were actually working together for her good.'

So short sighted are we, and such are the sinful infirmities of our nature, that but for the hand which keeps us back, and with-holds from us the objects of our fond pursuit till we are better prepared to receive them, we should often defeat our own plans, and plunge ourselves into inextricable difficulties. Thus we repine under the most needful chastise-

ments. We cannot brook opposition. When we set our hearts upon a favourite object, we must not only have it, but must obtain it in our own time, or we despond, perhaps murmur at the disappointment. Thus we betray at once our shortsightedness, our want of proper resignation, and of confidence in the wisdom and goodness of God; and all this too, in face of his recorded promises, of the whole history of the church, and of our own personal experience.

This point I have no hesitation in resting upon a direct appeal to my audience. Is there an adult now present, who cannot call to mind more than one incident in the short history of his own life, to corroborate the preceding statement? And is it not in the power of many, by extending the retrospect to the conduct and experience of others around them, to recall scores of similar incidents? You and your friends laid your plans, marked out your course, and chose your own time.

But God, though he may have approved both of the object and the motive, was in no haste to gratify your wishes: and you were greatly perplexed and discouraged by this seeming delay. In the end however, you saw how widely you had miscalculated, and that your safety and success depended upon the very disappointment which caused you so much disquietude. Thus it is, that in numberless instances, the help, which according to man's contracted and erring judgment comes lingering on long after it is wanted, is in his amount who "seeth the end from the beginning," afforded "right early."

You will perceive, my hearers, from the bearings

and relations of the subject before us, that it furnishes interesting matter for a great number of inferences and remarks; but I shall select those only, which strike me as most appropriate to the present occasion. And,

1. If we can do nothing without God's help, then we are bound to acknowledge him in all our ways, and thankfully to recognize his efficient aid in the accomplishment of every good enterprize. I am aware, that we are liable to "think more highly than we ought to think," not only of ourselves, but of all our favourite plans and institutions. These have fewer claims to wisdom and originality, and are less important, compared with others, than we are willing to believe. Our motives too may be wholly or partially wrong, where we little suspect it. Our measures may be ill chosen and unskilfully directed, when we are most confident that all is right; and the strong excitement of the moment, may present common events to our minds, as remarkable interpositions of providence. On these and many other accounts, we have the most abundant cause for self distrust and humility.

But after all, if God does approve of any thing we undertake; if he ever does give us wisdom to plan, and power to execute; if he ever does by a secret influence encourage us to proceed when we are ready to despond; if he crowns our labours with unlooked for success and raises up friends and benefactors, when we stand in the greatest need of their prayers and their aid; we are not to withhold from him the honour which is due, for fear of making

too much of our enterprizes. And in reviewing the most important changes and events of our lives, in thinking of our humble instrumentality where any good has been done, in calling to mind our perils and our deliverances, what inscription is so fit to be engraved in capitals upon all our Ebenezers, as "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us?"

2. If we can do nothing without God's help, let us unceasingly pray for it. Will he reward our stupid and criminal forgetfulness of his benefits by multiplying the number? Have we any right to expect he will give us what we never ask for; and if, to glorify himself, and to accomplish his all wise purposes, he should unasked stretch out his hand a thousand times to help us, how shameful, as well as criminal, must our ingratitude appear. Were we wholly or even partially independent of God, could we devise, or execute any useful scheme without him, could we even lay the simplest plan, or resist a temptation, or take a step, the case would be widely different. But since we can do nothing, how stupid, how inconceivably ungrateful is it in any one, to "restrain prayer."

Take a familiar case by way of illustration. What would you think of a son, who though entirely dependent on his father for every thing, should actually live for weeks and months and *years* together, without once taking the trouble to ask for a favour, or to acknowledge one? When did you ever see a little child, that could not go alone, refuse its mother's hand, or fail to express its gladness for her assistance? And yet my hearer, are you not

that ungrateful son? Are you this confiding, grateful child? What answer does conscience give? What will the dread trial of the last day disclose?

3. The thronging recollections which are called up by the occasion and the place of our present meeting, conspire to give an interest to the text which no ordinary circumstances could impart. These remembrances will be cordially welcomed and gratefully cherished to-day, by all the friends of this rising Seminary; and I cannot but feel, that I should disappoint the reasonable expectations of my audience, were I not to give them a prominent place in this discourse. To found a College on a broad and liberal basis, and put it in operation, and nurture its infancy, and earn for it the public confidence, and give it rank with the first class of literary institutions in the land, is a great undertaking; and if the measure of obligation to God for help, ought to be estimated by what he has enabled its friends to accomplish, in so short a time, no public seminary owes him louder ascriptions of praise than this.

Seven years ago the site of these buildings was a common field. Not a handful of earth had been thrown up. Not a board, not a foot of timber, not a brick was here:—nor a breath, nor a voice, save that of the storm. Wrapped in her wintry shroud, nature herself lay stiff and lifeless.

Much interest had indeed been felt and expressed, on the subject of educating pious and indigent young men of good talents, for the gospel ministry. And in furtherance of this benevolent object, the Trustees of Amherst Academy, as early as the

month of November, 1817, appointed a committee to solicit funds for the establishment of a classical professorship, in connection with that flourishing school. This was the first step towards what, in the good providence of God, has since been accomplished on a much larger scale. But the committee soon found, that no part of the *ten thousand dollars*, which was the sum proposed for the endowment, could be raised. The cause of this failure was, that in the judgment of the most enlightened friends of charitable education, to whom the plan was submitted, it was not sufficiently comprehensive and elevated, to answer the end in view; and as the Trustees themselves, upon further consideration, fully coincided in this judgment, the plan was given up. Such a failure, might under ordinary circumstances have been fatal to the whole scheme: but instead of being discouraged, the fathers of this now flourishing Institution, were stimulated to more vigorous efforts.

Rightly judging, that when the object, or occasion calls for it, a large sum can be more easily raised than a small one, they resolved to set their mark high; and instead of *ten thousand dollars*, to ask the friends of religion for *fifty thousand*. This sum, if it could be raised, was, by the terms of subscription, to be made the basis of a new Seminary for the charitable education of poor and pious young men, in all the branches of science and literature which are usually taught in Colleges; not, however, to the exclusion of other students.

That this plan, so benevolent in its object, and so magnificent upon paper, was regarded at first as vis-

ionary and impracticable, appears from the fact that the principal agent spent more than a year, at his own expense, in laborious and zealous personal solicitation, before he obtained a single subscriber. But notwithstanding this unpropitious beginning, the fifty thousand dollar subscription was filled up within the specified time. By the unalterable conditions of this instrument, no part of the principle can ever be expended. One sixth part of the annual interest must also be added, to increase the fund forever. The other five parts of the income, are sacredly devoted to assist indigent young men of hopeful piety and promising talents, in obtaining a collegiate education for the ministry.

This fund, the subscribers committed to the care and management of the Trustees of Amherst Academy, till an act of incorporation should be obtained for the proposed Collegiate Institution. But what could they do with it? They had no accommodations for charity students, and were not permitted to expend one dollar of the income in erecting buildings, or purchasing the necessary books and apparatus. Other funds they had none, and the success of any new subscription which might be tried was extremely doubtful. This was the precise state of things, no longer ago than the summer of 1820. It was an emergency which called for prayer and faith and action, of no ordinary energy and perseverance. No time was to be lost; for in vain had christian munificence laid this broad foundation, to raise up pastors for the churches and missionaries for the heathen, unless much more could

be done to give effect to the sacred charity. As I had not the honor of being one of the men, upon whose decision such mighty interests were suspended, I may speak with the more freedom on the present occasion. Unborn generations will, I doubt not, successively rise up to bless God, that casting themselves upon his help and the liberality of an enlightened christian community, the Trustees resolved to go forward, though they had not a cent in the treasury.

Accordingly, to adopt the language of one of them who cherished the germination, and has ever since watched the growth of this now stately monarch of the hill with the liveliest interest. "Some of the stones for the foundation of the first edifice having been collected by voluntary exertion, the ceremony of laying the corner stone was performed, with religious solemnities, on the ninth day of August 1820; the residue of the stones for the building being then in the mountains, the clay for the brick and the stones for the lime in the earth, and the timber in the forest. But by the united exertions of the benevolent, the walls were completed and the roof raised on the seventh day of November following, just *ninety* days from laying the corner stone. A good well was also dug, and when the roof and chimneys were completed, the bills unpaid and unprovided for, fell short of *thirteen hundred dollars.* Here the work was suspended for the winter; but was resumed early in the ensuing spring, and "by a series of like benevolent acts and efforts, the college edifice was completed, and about half the rooms

handsomely furnished, before the end of the next September." Thus it was, my hearers, that the projecters and early friends of this Institution resolutely faced discouragement, wrestled with that mighty antagonist poverty, and by dint of bone and muscle and sinew, prevailed. They could not but succeed in the end, because "the people had a mind to work," and when they saw that noble wing on my left completed, did they forget, think you, to write upon its walls, *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us?*

In the month of May 1821, Dr. Moore, who had for several years presided over Williams College with distinguished reputation and ability, was invited to take charge of the new Institution, as soon as it should be ready to receive students; and on the eighteenth day of September, he was invested with the office of President by the usual ceremonies of inauguration. "On the return of the procession, the ceremony of laying the corner stone of the President's house was performed with religious solemnity." The next day, *forty seven students* were admitted to Senior, Junior, Sophomore and Freshmen standing, according to their respective qualifications, and the first term commenced.

In the summer of 1822, a second College building was commenced, the President's house was completed, and at the first commencement in August, two young gentleman received the honours of the Institution. In the mean time, a subscription of *thirty thousand dollars* was opened for the payment of debts already contracted, to finish the building which was then in progress, and to defray other

necessary expenses. The second collegiate year, which began in Sept. 1822, was, with one great and mournful exception, an auspicious year to the Seminary. The number of students increased to almost a hundred, the subscription just mentioned was filled up before the end of June, and many other flattering testimonies of the public sentiment were received from almost every quarter. But an infinitely richer blessing than any of these, was sent down from heaven, in the second term of that year. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, a powerful revival of religion took place, in the progress of which the greater part of the students who where not already pious, expressed a hope of reconciliation to God, through faith in Christ. But while the friends of the Institution were yet lifting up their glad voices in the song of, *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us*, the accents of mourning suddenly broke upon their ears, and their joy was turned into sorrow. In the midst of his usefulness, after many a hard struggle, in which the very existence of his favourite Seminary had been threatened, and I had almost said, in the very moment of victory, Dr. Moore, the revered and beloved father and guide of all his pupils, was smitten down by the hand of death. But if he sacrificed his health and even his life to the interests of science and religion, he fell gloriously; and "his name," I doubt not, "will be had in everlasting remembrance." This deeply afflictive event took place on the thirtieth day of June, 1823.

The vacancy was supplied on the fifteenth of

October, and at the next session of the General Court, the petition for an act of incorporation, which had been presented in the spring and gained a favourable hearing, was urged with increasing vigour and hope of success. But though it prevailed in one branch of the Legislature, it was rejected in the other by a very small majority. It was renewed as early as possible in the next May Session, and the winter following, after a long and doubtful struggle, a bill was carried through both houses, and the Charter was signed on the twenty first day of February, 1825.

On the thirteenth day of April, the new Board of Trustees held their first meeting, and organized the College, under the provisions of the Act. As they found that the place had already become "too strait for us," by reason of the number of students, which had increased to nearly *one hundred and forty*, their attention was seriously turned to the erection of a new building; but owing to pecuniary embarrassments, no measures were taken to effect the object, till the annual meeting in August. By that time, the call for a chapel and other public accommodations had become too urgent to be post-poned, without sacrificing the interests of the College. In this emergency, the Trustees could not hesitate. They saw but one course, and they promptly empowered a committee to contract for the building of the Edifice in which we are now assembled. The work was commenced early in the spring of last year, and under the smiles of Providence in its completion, we have assembled this day, publicly to re-

cord our, *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us*, and solemnly to dedicate this commodious and beautiful structure to the service of Almighty God.

In looking round upon all that is here, upon these great buildings, these fine accommodations, these students, this crowded and joyful assembly; and in thinking of the unparalleled growth of this young Seminary, how can we help exclaiming, "What hath God wrought?" How distinct is the seal of his approbation upon this great work! Entire freedom from mistake, and perfect disinterestedness of motive, cannot indeed be claimed for any body of men, or any human enterprise. But I do believe, that after making every abatement on this score, it will be found in the great day, that much prayer and much faith have been embarked from the beginning in this undertaking; and that God has mightily assisted in carrying it forward. And it is a circumstance which demands our particular and grateful acknowledgements on this occasion, that not a life, nor a limb has been lost, and that no serious injury of any kind, has been experienced, in the erection of these buildings.

Again I feel constrained to say, "What hath God wrought?" Five years ago, there was one building for the accommodation of between *fifty and sixty* students on this ground; four years ago, there were between *ninety and a hundred* young men here; one year ago, there were a *hundred and fifty*; and now there are a *hundred and seventy*. In 1820, this seminary did not exist. In the fall of 1821, it was first organized. For more than three years, it

had to struggle with all the disabilities and discouragements of an unincorporated institution. It is scarcely two years since it was chartered; and yet, I believe, that in the number of undergraduates, it now holds the third, or fourth rank, in the long list of American Colleges! God forbid, that this statement should excite any but grateful emotions, in the bosoms of those by whose instrumentality so much has been accomplished. Let all boasting be excluded. There is no place for it here. The occasion calls, not for the mention of what *they* have done, but for devout acknowledgements to Him who justly claims all the glory. But though no man has any thing to boast of, it is meet that we should carefully look over this ground to-day, that the inscription may be indelibly graven upon our hearts, *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.*

I am fully aware, my hearers, that the brief historical sketch which I have given, of the rise and growth of this College, exhibits but a very faint and imperfect view, of the perils through which it has passed, and of the gracious interpositions to which it is indebted for its preservation and advancement. The present outline wants that filling up, which time forbids me to attempt; and indeed if I had time, I should feel incompetent to the task. None but those who nurtured its infancy, and witnessed its early struggles, and trembled for its very existence, can ever fully realize the greatness of its obligations to Him, who hath at length established it on so broad and firm a basis. How often, my friends in your early efforts to sustain and carry

it forward, did discouragements come so thick and fast upon you, as to demand all your resolution to bear up under them. How often did darkness hang so black upon all the future, that no man could see his way before him.

And yet, was there ever an extremity from which you were not soon delivered—or a night so dark that the eye had nothing to cheer it—or an event so adverse that you found no place to set up your Ebenezer, and write upon it, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us?"

When the Charter was withheld session after session, and the opposition was powerful and respectable and active, and your friends were beginning to despond, and you were required to pass the unprecedented ordeal of a public investigation, you were no doubt ready to say, "All these things are against us." But were you not entirely mistaken? Could you have chosen so wisely, as God was ordering events for you? Who is there that does not now see, how much this College is indebted to that long and arduous conflict, for its present elevated standing? Had the prayer of your first petition been granted, without debate or opposition, how many years would it have put the College back? And can you name one struggle, or one disappointment which has checked its rapid growth? Has more than one cloud ever passed over it, which had not its bright as well as its dark side?

Sitting and rejoicing as you do to-day, under the goodly shadow of this wide spreading tree, can you realize, that it is the same which five years ago was

a mere twig, exposed to be nipped by the frost, broken off by casualty, withered for want of root and nourishment, or trodden down in the eager conflict of opinion? That it lives and sends abroad its branches, and shoots up its top, and thickens its foilage, is owing more to the rain and the sunshine, than to human culture; while the praise of whatever culture has done to quicken its growth, belongs to God, from whom the ability and skill to cultivate it were both derived.

4. From the rich experience of the past, we derive great encouragement for the future. Hath God already done so much to build up this College and make it a public blessing, and will he now withdraw his gracious patronage? Hath he once so copiously refreshed it, by the effusion of his spirit, and will he not in answer to the prayer of faith, again and again "revive his work" within these walls? Hath he given it favour in the sight of the church, and secured for it hitherto a daily remembrance in her supplications? Hath he raised up benefactors, when its disposable funds were exhausted, as in the case of him, to whose munificent bequest we are so much indebted for these ample accommodations, and are not the hearts of all men still in his hands? Have our civil fathers placed upon it the seal of their approbation and adoption, by giving it a charter, and securing for themselves a direct participation in the management of its concerns, and may we not confidently look to them for still more substantial proofs of their friendly regards?

It might be thought presumption in us to say that our confidence in the stability and prosperity of this College is a divine faith; but what reason have we to doubt, that so long as the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom shall continue to be its primary object, he will cherish its growth and hear the prayers of its friends? If we are not greatly deceived, we behold in the past and in the present many an animating pledge of his approbation. And as he hath 'Hitherto so manifestly helped us,' may we not hope and believe, that he will continue and multiply his favours — that he will sustain that which he hath quickened into life, and nourished up in its sixth year, to so goodly a stature?

5. The subject of our present discourse, furnishes the best possible reasons for dedicating this noble edifice to God. All the materials were his, while yet they lay in the earth, or grew upon the mountains. He permitted us to take them away for his own use, and not simply, or chiefly for our convenience. They were all prepared and brought hither by his aid. And since they were collected, not a tool has been lifted up, not a stone has been laid, not a nail has been fastened without his help. The skill which planned and the strength which executed were both alike from him. That the builders fell not from their giddy heights, and that they were not crushed to death by falling timbers, was owing to his constant protection. If the Lord had not helped us, this massive structure had never risen, had never been commenced. It is his by every right, 'from the foundation to the topstone,'

and let us devoutly recognize him as the sole Proprietor, in the religious services of this day.

But there is a higher and a holier sense, in which this particular part of the building belongs to God. It was reared for holy purposes. It is intended to be the "house of God and the gate of heaven," for this Seminary, so long as the walls shall remain. It is to be, we trust, the home of the church for many generations. Here stands the altar which we are now to consecrate, and upon which the morning and evening sacrifices are to be offered. Here is God's Holy Book and here it is to remain, to be daily opened and read. Here a great and interesting family are daily to assemble, and to bow together before the throne of infinite mercy. Hither do we hope to come regularly with our offerings at evening; and when the gates of the morning are first opened, to be here again with our orisons.

Here too, the gospel of the grace of God is to be proclaimed—the church is to seek for edification and comfort, and sinners are to be "entreated in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God." And here, in due time, are to be celebrated the holy mysteries of our religion, in the body and blood of a crucified Redeemer.

Already have the two spacious Edifices on our right hand and on our left, been dedicated to God in the pious charities of hundreds, and the prayers of thousands, who will unite with us in praising him that he hath now 'built us a house' for his worship. Already has this College, (I use the word in its most comprehensive sense,) been dedicated to

"Christ and the Church," after the example of our pilgrim fathers, in the consecrated munificence of its founders. With the warmest approbation and christian fellowship, we recognize their pious intentions, and this new Edifice being now completed and ready for occupancy, it remains for us in a public and formal manner, to ratify their doings.

To God our Almighty Helper then, let us solemnly and heartily dedicate this beautiful fabrick, these walls, these seats, this pulpit, and all that belongs to this sanctuary. To God the Father, our Creator and Preserver, we fervently make this dedication. "Now therefore arise O Lord God, into thy resting place; thou and the ark of thy strength: Let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness."

To God the Son, our adorable Lord and Redeemer, we consecrate this house, which we have builded. Here may he ever be worshipped as King upon his holy hill of Zion. Here, in his name, may "deliverance be preached to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound." Here may sinners try the efficacy of his atoning blood, and be clothed with his righteousness as with a garment. Here may the hearts of his disciples burn within them, while he opens to them the scriptures; and as he makes himself known in the breaking of bread, may 'his fruit be sweet to their taste and his banner over them be love.'

To God the Holy Ghost, our Enlightener and Sanctifier, we dedicate this house of prayer. May he ever be present with us in our morning and even-

ing worship, and in all our solemn assemblies. May he be always here, to help the infirmities of the pious—to wake up the slumbering conscience —to edge and direct the sword which it is his prerogative to wield—to bow the stubborn will and break the stony heart—to bring the trembling penitent to Christ and apply the "blood of sprinkling." Here may He comfort mourners, succour the tempted, support the weak, rebuke the self-righteous, stimulate the lingering, alarm backsliders, tear away the hopes of the hypocrite, and bring back the prodigal in all his rags and hunger and wretchedness to his father's house.

Finally, we dedicate this Edifice to the use and service of the church of the living God, which he hath 'purchased with his own blood,' and 'which is the pillar and ground of the truth.' Here may she long worship and triumph in her King. Here may her communion be sweet and her "peace be as a river." Here may her love and her faith and her songs and her prayers abound. Here may her Jacobs wrestle and her Israels prevail: and here by the blessing of God upon her efforts and her holy example, may there be a continual revival, and in this way may the number of faithful ministers be greatly increased. Here may she nurture many an Apollos, "eloquent and mighty in the scriptures"—many an Edwards to illustrate and defend the truth of God—many a Reformer of the reformed nations, glowing with the burning zeal of Whitfield—many a Brainerd and Martyn to "go far hence unto the gentiles"—many a Wilberforce to plead the cause of the oppressed,

and many a Howard to "take the gague" of misery and crime, in prisons and hospitals.

Upon these heights of Zion may the banner of the cross ever wave, and as they behold it from afar, may thousands of young christian soldiers flock to the sacred standard, "put on the whole armour of God," and hold themselves in readiness for any service, however self-denying, or perilous, to which the "Captain of our salvation" may call them. If this now living fountain, shall ever become a stagnant and pestilential pool, from that hour, the sooner it is dried up the better: but may its sources always be kept pure, and may its perennial streams not only send health and gladness through the land, but flow on, to refresh and fertilize the "parched places" of distant continents and islands. May the church militant always possess a well stored armory upon these heights, till the shout of victory shall be heard on every hill, and the song of peace in every valley. If it be the holy pleasure of God, may that full orbid sun of a thousand years, which is now sending forward its rejoicing harbingers, shine upon this Seminary, through all its cloudless course; and if, when that sun is gone down, and darkness again broods over a revolting world, the dire inundation of Gog and Magog shall ever reach so far, here may its proud waves be stayed and its angry billows be broken.

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SERMON I.

BY JOHN M. MASON, D. D.

NEW-YORK.

LUKE vii, 22.—*To the poor the Gospel is preached.*

THE Old Testament closes with a remarkable prediction concerning Messiah and his forerunner. *Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.* Accordingly, at the appointed time, came John the Baptist, *in the spirit and power of Elias* saying, *Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* In his great work of *preparing the way of the Lord*, he challenged sin without respect of persons. The attempt was hazardous; but, feeling the majesty of his character, he was not to be moved by considerations which divert or intimidate the ordinary man. Name, sect, station, were alike to him. Not even the imperial purple, when it harboured a crime, afforded protection from his rebuke. His fidelity in this point cost him his life. For having *reproved Herod, for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done*, he was thrown into prison, and at length sacrificed to the most implacable of all resentments, the resentment of an abandoned woman.

It was in the interval between his arrest and execution, that he sent to Jesus the message on which my text is gounded. As his office gave him no security against the workings of unbelief in the hour of temptation, it is not strange, if, in a dungeon and in chains, his mind was invaded by an occasional doubt. The question, by two of his disciples, *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* has all the air of an inquiry for personal satisfaction; and so his Lord's reply seems to treat it. *Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is*

preached. The answer is clear and convincing. It enumerates the very signs by which the church was to know her God, *for whom she had waited;* and they were enough to remove the suspicions, and confirm the soul, of his servant John.

Admitting that Jesus Christ actually wrought the works here ascribed to him, every sober man will conclude with Nicodemus, *We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* It is not, however, my intention to dwell on the miraculous evidence of Christianity. The article, which I select as exhibiting it in a plain but interesting view, is, THE PREACHING OF GOSPEL TO THE POOR.

In scriptural language, "the poor," who are most exposed to suffering and least able to encounter it, represent all who are destitute of good necessary to their perfection and happiness; especially those who feel their want, and are disconsolate; especially those who are anxiously *waiting for the consolation of Israel.* Thus in Ps. xl, 17: *I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me.* Thus in Is. xli, 17: *When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst; I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.* Thus also, ch. lxi, 1: *The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the* MEEK; the same word with that rendered "poor;" and so it is translated by Luke, ch. iv, 18,—*to preach the gospel to the* POOR; which is connected, both in the prophet and evangelist, with *healing the* BROKEN-HEARTED. Our Lord, therefore, refers John, as he did the Jews in the synagogue at Nazareth, to this very prediction as fulfilled in himself. So that his own definition of his own religion is, *a system of consolation for the wretched.* This is so far from excluding the *literal poor*, that the success of the gospel with them is the pledge of its success with all others: for they not only form the majority of the human race, but they also bear the chief burden of its calamities. Moreover, as the sources of pleasure and pain are substantially the same in all men; and as affliction, by suspending the influence of their artificial distinctions, reduces them to the level of their common nature; whatever, by appealing to the principles of that nature, promotes the happiness of the multitude, must equally promote the happiness of the residue; and whatever consoles the one, must, in like circumstances, console the other also. As we cannot, therefore, maintain the suitableness of the gospel to the literal poor, who are the mass of mankind, without maintaining its prerogative of comforting the afflicted; nor, on the contrary, its prerogative of comforting, separately from its suitableness to the mass of mankind, I shall consider these two ideas as involving each other.

With this explanation, the first thing which demands your notice, is the FACT ITSELF—GOSPEL PREACHED TO THE POOR.

From the remotest antiquity there have been, in all civilized nations, men who devoted themselves to the increase of knowledge and happiness. Their speculations were subtle, their arguings acute, and many of their maxims respectable. But to whom were their instructions addressed? To casual visitors, to selected friends, to admiring pupils, to privileged orders! In some countries, and on certain occasions, when vanity was to be gratified by the acquisition of fame, their appearances were more public. For example, one read a poem, another a history, and a third a play, before the crowds assembled at the Olympic games. To be crowned there, was, in the proudest period of Greece, the summit of glory and ambition. But what did this, what did the mysteries of pagan worship, or what the lectures of pagan philosophy avail the *people?* Sunk in ignorance, in poverty, and crime, they lay neglected. Age succeeded to age, and school to school; a thousand sects and systems rose, flourished, and fell; but the degradation of the multitude remained. Not a beam of light found its way into their darkness, nor a drop of consolation into their cup. Indeed a plan for raising them to the dignity of rational enjoyment, and fortifying them against the disasters of life, was not to be expected: for as nothing can exceed the contempt in which they were held by the professors of wisdom; so any human device, however captivating in theory, would have been worthless in fact. The most sagacious heathen could imagine no better means of improving them than the precepts of his philosophy. Now, supposing it to be ever so salutary, its benefits must have been confined to a very few; the notion that the bulk of mankind may become philosophers, being altogether extravagant. They ever have been, and, in the nature of things, ever must be, unlearned. Besides, the groveling superstition and brutal manners of the heathen, presented insuperable obstacles. Had the plan of their cultivation been even suggested, especially if it comprehended the more abject of the species, it would have been universally derided, and would have merited derision, no less than the dreams of modern folly about the perfectibility of man.

Under this incapacity of *instructing* the poor, how would the pagan sage have acquitted himself as their *comforter?* His dogmas, during prosperity and health, might humour his fancy, might flatter his pride, or dupe his understanding; but against the hour of grief or dissolution he had no solace for himself, and could have none for others. I am not to be persuaded, in contradiction to every principle of my animal and rational being, that pain, and misfortune, and death, are no evils;

and are beneath a wise man's regard. And could I work myself up into so absurd a conviction, how would it promote my comfort? Comfort is essentially consistent with nature and truth. By perverting my judgment, by hardening my heart, by chilling my noble warmth, and stifling my best affections, I may grow stupid; but shall be far enough from consolation. Convert me into a beast, and I shall be without remorse; into a block, and I shall feel no pain. But this was not my request. I asked you for consolation, and you destroy my ability to receive it. I asked you to bear me over death, into the fellowship of immortals, and you begin by transforming me into a monster! Here are no glad tidings: nothing to cheer the gloom of outward or inward poverty. And the pagan teacher could give no better. From him, therefore, the miserable, even of his own country, and class, and kindred, had nothing to hope. But to *lift the needy from the dunghill*, and wipe away the tears from the mourner; to lighten the burdens of the heart; to heal its maladies, repair its losses, and enlarge its enjoyments; and that under every form of penury and sorrow, in all nations, and ages, and circumstances; as it is a scheme too vast for the human faculties, so, had it been committed to merely human execution, it could not have proceeded a single step, and would have been remembered only as a frantic reverie.

Yet all this hath Christianity undertaken. Her voice is, without distinction, to people of every colour, and clime, and condition: to the continent and the isles; to the man of the city, the man of the field, and the man of the woods; to the Moor, the Hindoo, and the Hottentot; to the sick and desperate; to the beggar, the convict, and the slave. She impairs no faculty, interdicts no affection, infringes no relation; but, taking men as they are, with all their depravity and woes, she proffers them peace and blessedness. Her boasting is not vain. The course of experiment has lasted through more than fifty generations of men. It is passing every hour before our eyes; and, for reasons to be afterwards assigned, has never failed, in a single instance, when it has been fairly tried.

The design is stupendous; and the least success induces us to inquire, by whom it was projected and carried into effect. And what is our astonishment, when we learn, that it was by men of obscure birth, mean education, and feeble resource: by men from a nation hated for their religion, and proverbial for their moroseness; by carpenters, and and tax-gatherers, and fishermen of Judea! What shall we say of this phenomenon? A recurrence to the Jewish Scriptures, which had long predicted it, either surrenders the argument, or increases the difficulty. If you admit that they reveal futurity, you recognise the finger of God,

and the controversy is at an end. If you call them mere conjectures, you are still to account for their correspondence with the event, and to explain how a great system of benevolence, unheard, unthought of by learned antiquity, came to be cherished, to be transmitted for centuries from father to son, and at length attempted, among the *Jews!* And you are also contradicted by the fact, that however clearly such a system is marked out in their scriptures, they were so far from adopting it, that they entirely mistook it; rejected it, nationally, with disdain; persecuted unto death those who embarked in it; and have not embraced it to this day! Yet in the midst of this bigoted and obstinate people, sprang up the deliverance of the human race. *Salvation is of the Jews.* Within half a century after the resurrection of Christ, his disciples had penetrated to the extremes of the Roman empire, and had carried the *day-spring from on high* to innumerable tribes who were *sitting in the region and shadow of death.* And so exclusively *Christian* is this plan, so remote from the sphere of common effort, that after it has been proposed and executed, men revert perpetually to their wonted littleness and carelessness. The whole face of Christendom is overspread with proofs, that, in proportion as they depart from the simplicity of the gospel, they forget the multitude as before, and the doctrines of consolation expire. In so far, too, as they adapt to their own notions of propriety, the general idea which they have borrowed from the gospel, of meliorating the condition of their species, they have produced, and are every day producing, effects the very reverse of their professions. Discontent, and confusion, and crimes, they propagate in abundance. They have smitten the earth with curses, and deluged it with blood; but the instance is yet to be discovered, in which they have *bound up the broken-hearted.* The *fact*, therefore, that Christianity is, in the broadest sense of the terms, *glad tidings to the poor*, is perfectly original. It stands without rival or comparison. It has no foundation in the principles of human enterprise; and could never have existed without the inspiration of that *Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift.*

II. As the Christian FACT is original, so the REASONS OF ITS EFFICACY ARE PECULIAR. Christianity can afford consolation, because *it is fitted to our nature and character.* I specify particulars:

First: The gospel proceeds upon the principle of *immortality.*

That our bodies shall die is indisputable. But that reluctance of nature, that panting after life, that horrour of annihilation, of which no man can completely divest himself, connect the death of the body with deep solicitude. While neither these, nor any other merely rational considerations, ascertain the certainty of future being; much less

of future bliss. The feeble light which glimmered around this point among the heathen, flowed not from investigation, but tradition. It was to be seen chiefly among the vulgar, who inherited the tales of their fathers; and among the poets, who preferred popular fable to philosophic speculation. Reason would have pursued her discovery; but the pagans knew not how to apply the notion of immortality, even when they had it. It governed not their precepts; it established not their hope. When they attempted to discuss the grounds of it, *they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.* The best arguments of Socrates are unworthy of a child, who has *learned the holy scriptures*. And it is remarkable enough that the doctrine of immortality is as perfectly detached, and as barren of moral effect, in the hands of modern infidels, as it was in the hands of the ancient pagans. They have been so unable to assign it a convenient place in their system; they have found it to be so much at variance with their habits, and so troublesome in their warfare with the scriptures, that the more resolute of the sect have discarded it altogether. With the soberer part of them it is no better than an opinion; but it never was, and never will be a source of true consolation, in any system or any bosom, but the system of Christianity and the bosom of the Christian. *Life and immortality*, about which some have guessed; for which all have sighed; but of which none could trace the relations, or prove the existence; are not merely hinted, they *are brought to light by the gospel.* This is the parting point with every other religion; and yet the very point upon which our happiness hangs. That we shall survive the body, and pass from its dissolution to the bar of God, and from the bar of God to endless retribution, are truths of infinite moment, and of pure revelation. They demonstrate the incapacity of temporal things to content the soul. They explain why grandeur, and pleasure, and fame, leave the heart sad. He who pretends to be my comforter without consulting my immortality, overlooks my essential want. The gospel supplies it. Immortality is the basis of her fabric. She resolves the importance of man into its true reason—the *value of his soul.* She sees under every human form, however rugged or abused, a spirit unalterable by external change, unassailable by death, and endued with stupendous faculties of knowledge and action, of enjoyment and suffering; a spirit, at the same time, depraved and guilty; and therefore liable to irreparable ruin. These are Christian views. They elevate us to a height, at which the puny theories of the world stand and gaze. They stamp new interest on all my relations, and all my acts. They hold up before me objects vast as my wishes, terrible as my fears, and permanent as my being. They bind me to eternity.

Secondly: Having thus unfolded the general doctrine of immortality, the gospel advances further, informing us, that although a future life is sure, *future blessedness is by no means a matter of course.* This receives instant confirmation from a review of our character as *sinners.*

None but an atheist, or, which is the same thing, a madman, will deny the existence of moral obligation, and the sanction of moral law. In other words, that it is our duty to obey God, and that he has annexed penalties to disobedience. As little can it be denied that we have actually disobeyed him. Guilt has taken up its abode in the conscience, and indicates, by signs not to be misunderstood, both its presence and power. To call this superstition, betrays only that vanity, which thinks to confute a doctrine by giving it an ill name. Depravity and its consequences meet us, at every moment, in a thousand shapes; nor is there an individual breathing who has escaped its taint. Therefore our relations to our Creator as innocent creatures have ceased; and are succeeded by the relation of rebels against his government. In no other light can he contemplate us, because his *judgment is according to truth.* A conviction of this begets alarm and wretchedness. And, whatever some may pretend, a guilty conscience is the secret worm, which preys upon the vitals of human peace: the invisible spell, which turns the draught of pleasure into wormwood and gall. To laugh at it as an imaginary evil, is the mark of a fool: for what can be more rational than to tremble at the displeasure of an almighty God. If, then, I ask how I am to be delivered? or whether deliverance is possible? human reason is dumb: or if she open her lips, it is only to teaze me with conjectures, which evince that she knows nothing of the matter. Here the Christian verity interferes; showing me, on the one hand, that my alarm is well founded; that my demerit and danger are far beyond even my own suspicions; that God, with whom I have to do, *will by no means clear the guilty;* but on the other hand, revealing the provision of his infinite wisdom and grace, for releasing me from guilt. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* The more I ponder this method of salvation, the more I am convinced that it displays the divine perfection, and exalts the divine government; so that *it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* Now I know where to obtain the first requisite to happiness, pardon of sin. In Christ Jesus, the Lord, is that justifying righteousness, the want of which, though I

was ignoraut of the cause, kept me miserable till this hour. I cling to it, and am safe. His precious blood *purges my conscience.* It *extends peace to me as a river, and the glory of redemption like a flowing stream.* My worst fears are dispelled: *the wrath to come* is not for me: I can look with composure at futurity, and feel joy springing up with the thought that I am immortal.

Thirdly: In addition to deliverance from wrath, Christianity provides relief against the *plague of the heart.*

It will not be contested, that disorder reigns among the passions of men. The very attempts to rectify it are a sufficient concession; and their ill success shows their authors to have been *physicians of no value.* That particular ebullitions of passion have been repressed, and particular habits of vice overcome, without Christian aid, is admitted. But if any one shall conclude, that these are examples of victory over the *principle* of depravity, he will greatly err. For, not to insist that the experience of the world is against him, we have complete evidence, that all reformations, not evangelical, are merely an exchange of lusts; or rather, the elevation of one evil appetite by the depression of another; the *strength* of depravity continuing the same; its *form* only varied. Nor can it be otherwise. Untaught of God, the most comprehensive genius is unable either to trace the original of corruption, or to check its force. It has its fountain where he least and last believes it to be; but where the omniscient eye has searched it out; in the human heart; the heart, filled with *enmity against God*—the heart, *deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.* "But, the discovery being made, his measures, you hope, will take surer effect." Quite the contrary. It now defies his power, as it formerly did his wisdom. How have disciples of the moral school studied and toiled! how have they resolved, and vowed, and fasted, watched, and prayed, travelling through the whole circuit of devout austerities! and set down at last, *wearied in the greatness of their way!* But no marvel! the *Ethiopian cannot change his skin nor the leopard his spots.* Neither can impurity purify itself. Here again, light from the footsteps of the Christian truth breaks in upon the darkness; and gospel again flows from her tongue; the gospel of a *new heart*—the gospel of regenerating and sanctifying grace; as the promise, the gift, the work of God. "*I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh; and I will give you an heart of flesh; and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.*" Here all our difficulties are re-

solved at once. The spirit of life in Christ Jesus, quickens *the dead in trespasses and sins. The Lord, our strength, works in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power.* That which was impossible with men, is not so with him; for *with him all things are possible; even the subduing our iniquities;* creating us anew, after his own image, *in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness;* turning our polluted souls into his own *habitation through the Spirit;* and making us *meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.* Verily this *is gospel;* worthy to go in company with remission of sin. And shall I conquer at last? Shall I, indeed, be delivered from the bondage and the torment of corruption? A new sensation passes through my breast. *I lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help;* and with the hope of *perfecting holiness in the fear of God,* hail my immortality.

Fourthly: Having thus removed our guilt and cleansed our affections, the gospel proceeds to put us in possession of *adequate enjoyment.* An irresistible law of our being impels us to seek happiness. Nor will a million of frustrated hopes deter from new experiments; because despair is infinitely more excruciating than the fear of fresh disappointment. But an impulse, always vehement and never successful, multiplies the materials and inlets of pain. This assertion carries with it its own proof; and the principle it assumes is verified by the history of our species. In every place, and at all times, ingenuity has been racked to meet the ravenous desires. Occupation, wealth, dignity, science, amusement, all have been tried; are all tried at this hour; and all in vain. The heart still repines: the unappeased cry is, Give, give. There is a fatal error somewhere; and the gospel detects it. Fallen away from God, we have substituted the creature in his place. This is the grand mistake: the fraud which sin has committed upon our nature. The gospel reveals God as the satisfying good, and brings it within our reach. It proclaims him reconciled in Christ Jesus, as our father, our friend, our portion. It introduces us into his presence, with liberty to ask in the Intercessor's name, and asking, *to receive, that our joy may be full.* It keeps us under his eye; surrounds us with his arm; feeds us upon *living bread* which he *gives from heaven:* seals us up to an eternal inheritance; and even engages to reclaim our dead bodies from the grave, and fashion them in beauty, which shall vie with heaven! It is enough! my prayers and desires can go no further: I have got to the *fountain of living waters—Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee!*

This gospel of immortality, in righteousness, purity, and bliss, would be inestimable, were it even obscure, and not to be comprehended without painful scrutiny. But I observe again,

Fifthly: That, unlike the systems of men, and contrary to their anticipations, the gospel is as *simple*, as it is glorious. Its primary doctrines, though capable of exercising the most disciplined talent, are adapted to the common understanding. Were they dark and abstruse, they might gratify a speculative mind, but would be lost upon the multitude, and be unprofitable to all, as doctrines of consolation. The mass of mankind never can be profound reasoners. To omit other difficulties, they have not leisure. Instruction, to do them good, must be interesting, solemn, repeated, and plain. This is the benign office of the gospel. Her principal topics are few; they are constantly recurring in various connexions; they come home to every man's condition; they have an interpreter in his bosom: they are enforced by motives which honesty can hardly mistake, and conscience will rarely dispute. Unlettered men, who love their bible, seldom quarrel about the prominent articles of faith and duty; and as seldom do they appear among the proselytes of that meagre refinement which arrogates the title of *Philosophical Christianity*.

From its simplicity, moreover, the gospel derives advantages in consolation. Grief, whether in the learned or illiterate, is always simple. A man, bowed down under calamity, has no relish for investigation. His powers relax; he leans upon his comforter; his support must be without toil, or his spirit faints. Conformably to these reflections, we see, on the one hand, that the unlearned compose the bulk of Christians; the life of whose souls is in the substantial doctrines of the cross—and on the other, that in the time of affliction even the careless lend their ear to the voice of revelation. Precious, at all times, to believers, it is doubly precious in the hour of trial. These things prove, not only that the gospel, when understood, gives a peculiar relief in trouble, but that it is readily apprehended; being most acceptable, when we are the least inclined to critical research.

Sixthly: The gospel, so admirable for its simplicity, has also the recommendation of *truth*. The wretch who dreams of transport, feels a new sting in his wretchedness, when he opens his eyes and the delusion is fled. No real misery can be removed, nor any real benefit conferred by doctrines which want the seal of certainty. And were the gospel of Jesus a human invention; or were it checked by any rational suspicion, that it may turn out to be a fable; it might retain its brilliancy, its sublimity, and even a portion of its interest; but the charm of its consolation would be gone. Nay, it would add gall to bitterness, by fostering a hope, which the next hour might laugh to scorn. But we may dismiss our anxiety; for there is no hazard of such an issue. Not only "grace," but "*truth*," came by Jesus Christ. *The gracious*

words which proceeded out of his mouth, were words of the *Amen, the faithful and true Witness*; and those which he has written in his blessed book, are *pure words, as silver tried in the furnace, purified seven times.* His promises no man can deny to be *exceeding great;* yet they derive their value to us from assurances, which, by satisfying the hardest conditions of evidence, render doubt not only inexcusable, but even criminal. *By two immutable things in which it was* IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO LIE, *we have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.* Now, therefore, the promises of the gospel which are "exceeding great," are also "precious." We need not scruple to trust ourselves for this life and the life to come, upon that word which shall stand when *heaven and earth pass away.* Oh, it is this which makes Christianity glad tidings to the depressed and perishing! No fear of disappointment! No hope that shall *make ashamed!* Under the feet of evangelical faith is a covenant-promise, and that promise is everlasting Rock. *I know*, said one, whose testimony is corroborated by millions in both worlds, *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

Lastly: The gospel, as a system of consolation, is perfected by the *authority* and energy which accompany it. The devices of man originate in his fancy, and expire with his breath. Destitute of power, they play around depravity, like shadows round the mountain top, and vanish without leaving an impression. Their effect would be inconsiderable, could he manifest them to be true; because he cannot compel the admission of truth itself into the human mind. Indifference, unreasonableness, prejudice, petulance, oppose to it an almost incredible resistance. We see this in the affairs of every day, and especially in the stronger conflicts of opinion and passion. Now, beside the opposition which moral truth has always to encounter, there is a particular reason why the truth of the gospel, though most salutary, though attested by every thing within us and around us; by life and death; by earth and heaven and hell; will not succeed unless backed by divine energy. It is this: Sin has perverted the understanding of man, and poisoned his heart. It persuaded him first to throw away his blessedness, and then to hate it. The reign of this hatred, which the scriptures call *enmity against God*, is most absolute in every unrenewed man. It teaches him never to yield a point unfriendly to one corruption, without stipulating for an equivalent in favour of another. Now, as the gospel flatters *none* of his corruptions in *any* shape, it meets with deadly hostility from *all his corruptions* in *every* shape. It is to no purpose that you press upon him the "*great salvation*;" that you demonstrate his errors and their

corrective; his diseases and their cure. Demonstrate you may, but you convert him not. He will occasionally startle and listen; but it is only to relapse into his wonted supineness: and you shall as soon call up the dead from their dust, as awaken him to a sense of his danger, and prevail with him to embrace the salvation of God. "Where then," you will demand, "is the pre-eminence of your gospel?" I answer, with the apostle Paul, that *it is the power of God to salvation.* When a sinner is to be converted, that is, when a slave is to be liberated from his chains, and a rebel from execution, that same voice which has spoken in the scriptures, speaks by them to his heart, and commands an audience.—He finds the word of God to be *quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.* It sets him before the bar of Justice; strips him of his self-importance; *sweeps away his refuge of lies;* and shows him that death which is *the wages of sin.* It then conducts him, all trembling, to the divine forgiveness; reveals Christ Jesus in his soul, as his righteousness, his peace, his hope of glory. Amazing transition! But is not the cause equal to the effect? *Hath not the potter power over the clay?* Shall God draw, and the lame not run? Shall God speak, and the deaf not hear? Shall God breathe, and the slain not live? Shall God *lift up the light of his countenance* upon sinners reconciled in his dear Son, and they not be happy? Glory to his name! These are no fictions. *We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen. The record, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart,* is possessed by thousands who have *turned from the power of Satan unto God,* and will certify that the revolution was accomplished by his word. And if it perform such prodigies on corruption and death, what shall it not perform in directing, establishing, and consoling them, who have already obtained a *good hope through grace?* He who thunders in the curse, speaks peace in the promise; and none can conceive its influence, but they who have witnessed it. For proofs you must not go to the statesman, the traveller, or the historian. You must not go to the gay profession, or the splendid ceremonial. You must go to the chamber of unostentatious piety. You must go to the family anecdote, to the Christian tradition, to the observation of faithful ministers. Of the last there are many who, with literal truth, might address you as follows. "I *have seen* this gospel hush into a calm the tempest raised in the bosom by conscious guilt. I *have seen* it melt down the most obdurate into tenderness and contrition. I *have seen* it cheer up the broken-hearted, and bring the tear of gladness into eyes swollen with grief. I *have seen* it produce and maintain serenity under evils, which drive the worldling mad. I *have seen* it reconcile the sufferer to his cross, and send the song of

praise from lips quivering with agony. I *have seen* it enable the most affectionate relatives to part in death; not without emotion, but without repining; and with a cordial surrender of all that they held most dear to the disposal of their heavenly Father. I *have seen* the fading eye brighten at the promise of Jesus, *Where I am, there shall my servant be also.* I *have seen* the faithful spirit released from its clay, now mildly, now triumphantly, to enter into the joy of its Lord."

Who, among the children of men, that *doubts* this representation, would not *wish* it to be correct? Who, that thinks it only *probable*, will not welcome the doctrine on which it is founded, as *worthy of all acceptation?* And who, that *knows* it to be true, will not set his seal to that doctrine as being, most emphatically, *gospel preached to the poor?*

In applying to practical purposes, the account which has now been given of the Christian religion, I remark,

1. That it fixes a criterion of Christian ministrations.

If he, who *spake as never man spake*, has declared his own doctrine to abound with consolation to the miserable, then, certainly, the instructions of others are evangelical, only in proportion as they subserve the same gracious end. A contradiction not unfrequent among some advocates of revelation, is to urge against the infidel its power of comfort, and yet to avoid, in their own discourses, almost every principle from which that power is drawn. Disregarding the mass of mankind, to whom the gospel is peculiarly fitted; and omitting those truths which might revive the grieved spirit, or touch the slumbering conscience, they discuss their moral topics in a manner unintelligible to the illiterate, uninteresting to the mourner, and without alarm to the profane. This is not "preaching Christ." Elegant dissertations upon virtue and vice, upon the evidences of revelation, or any other general subject, may entertain the prosperous and the gay; but they will not *mortify our members which are upon the earth;* they will not unsting calamity, nor feed the heart with an imperishable hope. When I go to the house of God, I do not want amusement. I want *the doctrine which is according to godliness.* I want to hear of the remedy against the harassings of my guilt, and the disorder of my affections. I want to be led from weariness and disappointment, to that *goodness which filleth the hungry soul.* I want to have light upon the mystery of providence; to be taught how the *judgments of the Lord are right;* how I shall be prepared for duty and for trial—how I may *pass the time of my sojourning here in fear*, and close it in peace. Tell me of that Lord Jesus, *who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.* Tell me of his *intercession for the transgressors* as their *Advocate with*

the Father. Tell me of his Holy Spirit, whom *they that believe on him receive*, to be their preserver, sanctifier, comforter. Tell me of his chastenings; their necessity, and their use. Tell me of his presence, and sympathy, and love. Tell me of the virtues, as growing out of his cross, and nurtured by his grace. Tell me of the glory reflected on his name by the obedience of faith. Tell me of vanquished death, of the purified grave, of a blessed resurrection, of the life everlasting—and my bosom warms. This is gospel; these are glad tidings to me as a sufferer, because glad to me as a sinner. They rectify my mistakes; allay my resentments; rebuke my discontent; support me under the weight of moral and natural evil. These attract the poor; steal upon the thoughtless; awe the irreverent; and throw over the service of the sanctuary a majesty, which some fashionable modes of address never fail to dissipate. Where they are habitually neglected, or lightly referred to, there may be much grandeur, but there is no gospel; and those preachers have infinite reason to tremble, who, though admired by the great, and caressed by the vain, are deserted by the poor, the sorrowful, and such as *walk humbly with their God*.

2. We should learn from the gospel, lessons of active benevolence. The Lord Jesus, *who went about doing good, has left us an example, that we should follow his steps*. Christians, on whom he has bestowed affluence, rank, or talent, should be the last to disdain their fellow-men, or to look with indifference on indigence and grief. Pride, unseemly in all, is detestable in them, who confess that *by grace they are saved*. Their Lord and Redeemer, who humbled himself by assuming their nature, came to *deliver the needy, when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper*. And surely an object, which was not unworthy of the Son of God, cannot be unworthy of any who are called by his name. Their wealth and opportunities, their talents and time, are not their own, nor to be used according to their own pleasure; but to be consecrated by their vocation *as fellow-workers with God*. How many hands that hang down would be lifted up; how many feeble knees confirmed; how many tears wiped away; how many victims of despondency and infamy rescued by a close imitation of Jesus Christ. Go with your opulence to the house of famine, and the retreats of disease. Go, *deal thy bread to the hungry; when thou seest the naked, cover him; and hide not thyself from thine own flesh*. Go, and furnish means to rear the offspring of the poor; that they may at least have access to the word of your God. Go, and quicken the flight of the Angel, who has *the everlasting gospel to preach* unto the nations. If you possess not wealth, employ your *station* in promoting *good-will toward men*. *Judge the fatherless; plead for the*

widow. Stimulate the exertions of others, who may supply what is *lacking on your part.* Let the *beauties of holiness* pour their lustre upon your distinctions, and recommend to the unhappy that peace, which yourselves have found in the salvation of God. If you have neither riches nor rank, devote your *talents.* Ravishing are the accents which dwell on *the tongue of the learned*, when it *speaks a word in season to him that is weary.* Press your genius and your eloquence into the service of the *Lord your righteousness*, to magnify his word, and display the riches of his grace. Who knoweth, whether he may honour you to be the minister of joy to the disconsolate, of liberty to the captive, of life to the dead? If he has denied you wealth, and rank, and talent, consecrate your *heart.* Let it dissolve in sympathy. There is nothing to hinder your *rejoicing with them that do rejoice, and your weeping with them that weep;* nor to forbid the interchange of kind and soothing offices. *A brother is born for adversity;* and not only should Christian be to Christian, *a friend that sticketh closer than a brother*, but he should exemplify the loveliness of his religion to *them that are without.* An action, a word, marked by the sweetness of the gospel, has often been owned of God for producing the happiest effects. Let no man, therefore, try to excuse his inaction; for no man is too inconsiderable to augment the triumphs of the gospel, by assisting in the consolation which it yields to the miserable.

3. Let all classes of the unhappy repair to the Christian truth, and *draw water with joy out of its wells of salvation!* Assume your own characters, O ye children of men; present your grievances, and accept the consolation which the gospel tenders. Come, now, ye tribes of pleasure, who have exhausted your strength in pursuing phantoms that retire at your approach! The voice of the Son of God in the gospel is, Wherefore *spend ye your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not; hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good and let your soul delight itself in fatness!* Come, ye tribes of ambition, who burn for the applause of your fellow worms. The voice of the Son of God to you is, *The friendship of this world is enmity with God;* but *if any serve me, him will my Father honour.* Come, ye avaricious, who *pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor.* The voice of the Son of God is, Wisdom is *more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her*—but *what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* Come, ye profane! The voice of the Son of God is, *Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness; behold I bring near my righteousness.* Come, ye formal and self-sufficient, who say *that ye are rich, and increased with*

goods and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. The voice of the Son of God is, *I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire that ye may be rich; and white raiment, that ye may be clothed; and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear, and anoint your eyes with eye-salve, that ye may see.* Come, ye, who, being convinced of sin, fear least the *fierce anger of the Lord fall upon you.* The voice of the Son of God is, *Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* Come, ye disconsolate, whose souls are sad, because the Comforter is away. The voice of the Son of God is, The Lord *hath sent me to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.* Come, ye tempted, who are borne down with the violence of the *law in your members*, and of assaults from the evil one. The voice of the son of God is, *I will be merciful to your unrighteousnesses; and the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.* Come, ye children of domestic woe, upon whom the Lord has made a breach, by taking away your counsellors and support.—The voice of the Son of God is, *Leave thy fatherless children with me; I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.* Come, ye, from whom mysterious providence has swept away the acquisitions of long and reputable industry. The voice of the Son of God is, *My son, if thou wilt receive my words*, thou shalt have *a treasure in the heavens that faileth not;* and mayest *take joyfully the spoiling of thy goods, knowing that thou hast in heaven a better and an enduring substance.* Come, ye poor, who without property to lose, are grappling with distress and exposed to want. The Son of God, though the heir of all things, *had not where to lay his head;* and his voice to his poor is, *Be content with such things as you have, for I will never leave thee nor forsake thee; thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure.* Come, ye reproached, who find *cruel mockings* a most bitter persecution. The voice of the Son of God is, *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you.* Come, in fine, ye dejected whom the fear of death holds in bondage. The voice of the Son of God is, *I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues! O grave, I will be thy destruction! repentence shall be hid from mine eyes!*—Blessed Jesus! thy loving kindness shall *be my joy in the house of my pilgrimage!* and I will praise thee *while I have any being*, for that gospel which thou hast preached to the poor!

THE

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Go....Teach all Nations....*Mat.* xxviii, 19.

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SERMON III.

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NEW-YORK.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

Luke xxiv. 26.—*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?*

This question occurs in our Saviour's interesting conversation with the two disciples going to Emmaus. It was on the third day after His crucifixion, that He, in a mysterious manner, drew near and conversed with them, as they walked and were expressing their astonishment at the events, which had just "come to pass." We think it strange, that the intimate companions of the Lord Jesus should have been so ignorant of the real design of His mission to our world. We think it strange, that they should have been so overwhelmed with surprise and consternation, when He was condemned, crucified, and buried; and that they should have been so astonished at His resurrection; when these events had been distinctly foretold by the prophets, and by the Saviour himself. We think it strange, that the Jews, as a nation, should have continued in obstinate unbelief of His divine Messiahship—especially after His Resurrection, which established the faith of His disciples, and which ought to convince the world.

Is there not, however, something of the same kind of ignorance and unbelief among ourselves; though we have always had in our hands

the writings of the prophets, and the plain corresponding history of their fulfilment ? Yes, even the good man, the humble believer of the New Testament, sometimes thinks it almost unaccountable, and incredible, that " the Lord of life and glory, the Creator of all things," Should move from His throne ; Should come down to our guilty world ; Should assume our nature ; Should, in that nature, submit to a life of poverty and toil ; Should consent to be arraigned at a human tribunal ; To be condemned by lying testimony ; And finally to endure an ignominious death ! The heart of the Christian, at some moments, revolts with horrour at the narration ; and is almost unwilling to believe it. Whilst there are others, who actually laugh at the Scriptural account,—or at least explain away its meaning,—as utterly unworthy of the majesty of God, and unnecessary for the safety of man, and therefore not to be believed. But to all these the Omniscient Saviour replies, " *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory ?*"

Our present object will be to answer this question, not by a reference to the ancient prophecies, but by showing, *that there was infinite propriety and wisdom in the humiliation and sufferings of Christ.* In order to show this, we must inquire, what has been gained by His sufferings ? The question before us then is,

WHAT HAS BEEN GAINED TO THE UNIVERSE BY THE SUFFERINGS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST ?

In answering this question we shall think it proper to repeat much of what " holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," have told us on the subject. And,

I. IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST, AN INNUMERABLE MULTITUDE OF OUR RACE WILL BE RAISED FROM A STATE OF SINFUL DEGRADATION AND MISERY, AND EXALTED TO THE SOCIETY OF ANGELS AND OF GOD.

Says the beloved John, rapt in prophetic vision, " I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kinkreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." And what are the employments of this great multitude ? and who are their associates ? The same John tells us, they were employed in praising

God.—" They cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb." And concerning their associates, he tells us, " all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God." And what is the history of these beings, collected out of all nations?—from what situation did they come? how were they qualified to associate with angels in the worship of heaven? The answer of the Spirit is, " These are they, which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He, that sitteth upon the throne, shall dwell among them."

It appears, then, that this multitude were once in a world of trouble and pollution; but have been washed in a Redeemer's blood; and *therefore* are qualified to serve God in His temple above; and to associate with God and angels. It appears also from another scripture, that " without shedding of blood there is no remission." All this elevation, then, of that great multitude, which man could never count, and of all who ascend from earth to heaven, is in consequence of the " shedding of blood"—in consequence of the " sufferings of Christ."

And brethren, dwell for one moment on the change of character and situation here wrought through Christ. Once that great multitude were sinners of every description—slaves of every unhallowed lust!—some of them " thieves, drunkards, swearers, liars, fornicators, adulterers, murderers;"—all of them " haters of God"!—But now they are " washed—purified—sanctified—in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Once their understandings were all darkened—their affections groveling;—willing slaves of Satan—they sought the company of wicked men and devils! Now their minds are enlightened from the Sun of Righteousness;—refined by the purity of the heavens—they mingle with bright angels! Once they were far from God—far from Christ. Now they are " brought nigh by the blood of Christ"—" see God face to face"—" see as they are seen"—" know as they are known": Now they shine forth " in the likeness of Christ"—put on the robes of " His righteousness"—" walk with Him in white"—" converse with Him, as a man with his friend."

All this change of character and situation, let me repeat, is in consequence of " the sufferings of Christ." These beings have been redeemed from prisons of darkness and pollution, and elevated to " mansions of glory,"—" not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish

and without spot." Ought not Christ, then, to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? But, in addition to their present elevation, I would next remark,

II. In consequence of the sufferings of Christ, all, who finally believe and trust in Him, as the Son of God, will be *confirmed* in a state of perfect holiness and happiness for ever.

The nature of the first Covenant, which God proposed to man, was, "Do this and thou shalt live"—Yield perfect obedience to the Law of God, and ye shall be happy in the favour of God—But "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." "Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things written in the book of the Law to do them." So that under *that* Covenant, man must have depended for safety and happiness on his continued obedience to the Law of God, *without any assurance that God would uphold him by His power*. Now even *that* was a *good* Covenant, and perfectly *reasonable*, and such as man is utterly without excuse for having broken; because the *Law* was reasonable—"The Law was holy, just and good." But still, (thanks to boundless mercy and forbearance,) instead of blasting the rebels at once to hell! Christ, by His voluntary sufferings, has become "the Mediator of a *better* Covenant, which was established upon *better* promises." The substance of this New Covenant, (formed by the "Three that bear record in heaven,") was, That if Christ would descend from heaven to earth, and, in human nature, make atonement for sinners, by laying down His own life, the Holy Spirit should be given to sanctify all that should believe, and to uphold them for ever in a state of purity and glory. So that the endless security of all true Christians, on earth and in heaven, now depends, not on any confidence in their own strength, or greater attainments in holiness, than those of Adam, but on the *promise* and power of Almighty God, granted *through the blood of the everlasting Covenant*.

Christ never would have left His Throne for a Cross, without a "sure word of promise" from the Eternal Father, that He should "see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." He never would have redeemed sinners, with His own blood, without a sure warrant from the Court of Heaven, that *of all that the Father had given Him, He should lose none;* but that *they should be kept by the power of God, through faith unto eternal salvation*. With "more than twelve legions of angels" at His command, He never would have surrendered Himself to be condemned by mortals, and to be "crucified by wicked hands," had He

not known distinctly the everlasting benefits to be accomplished by His death. He never would have died upon uncertainties. He never would have purchased pardon and restoration for countless millions of rebels against His own government, if, after they were restored, they must still be left liable every moment to fall off from His kingdom, and again to rebel. No ;—long before He entered on this errand of reconciliation, it was stipulated in heaven, that all who should be reclaimed by His mediation, should maintain for ever their allegiance to His throne. It was "for the joy thus set before Him, that He endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

In exact accordance with these sentiments, the Saviour, when He appeared on our world, said of Himself, "I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live *for ever*. And the bread, that I will give, is my flesh; which I will give for the life of the world. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath *eternal* life. I give unto them *eternal* life; neither shall any pluck them out of my hands."

In a similar strain of assurance the apostle Paul says, "By one offering He hath perfected *for ever* them that are sanctified. The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is *eternal* life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The apostle reasons strongly and triumphantly, when he says, "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout —with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we, who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be *ever* with the Lord." No possibility of again falling off from His kingdom.

But what mortal or immortal Power can speak the *privilege* of believers, in being thus *confirmed for ever* in a state of perfect Holiness and union to the Saviour? Oh! could the thought once enter their minds, that *possibly*, after millions and millions of ages, they might again become "THE ENEMIES OF GOD"!—Oh! it would send a thrill of horrour through all their ranks!—it would suspend for ever their songs of victory!—it would throw darkness impenetrable over all that Eternity, which is before them! it would more than half eclipse the splendours of the Sun of Righteousness! But fear not, ye redeemed! There is no such *possibility*. The promise and oath of Jehovah are pledged for your security. The Covenant of Redemption, by which

ye were given to Christ, before the foundation of the world, as well as the Covenant of Grace, by the acceptance of which ye have bound yourselves to His throne, is an "*Everlasting Covenant.*"

And now, brethren, let it be remembered, that this *everlasting* elevation of human character—this eternal *confirmation* of believers in glory and happiness, is all in consequence of *the shedding of blood*—in consequence of the *sufferings of Christ.* Ought not Christ then to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? But the benefits of Christ's death are not confined to men. Which leads me to observe,

III. In the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, *the Divine Character*, in its various attributes, is gloriously displayed.

The *wisdom* of God is particularly manifested in this transaction. When the immutable Law of God was broken, and countless millions were involved in its curse, no mind of man—no mind of angel—could have contrived, how any of the transgressors might escape punishment, and yet the justice of God be maintained. The declaration had gone forth, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But Infinite Wisdom saw, that it was in the power of One of the Persons of the adorable Trinity, in a short period of humiliation and suffering, to make such an Atonement, as would, in the view of an intelligent Universe, be considered a sufficient Substitute for the eternal punishment of the transgressors. Infinite Wisdom adopted this Substitute. The Sacrifice has voluntarily been made. And the everlasting benefits of it are now freely enjoyed by all who are pleased to accept of it in faith; by all who will now *look unto Him and be saved.*

In making this Atonement, inconceivably great as Christ's sufferings were, He did not, however, endure those *remorseful* pangs—those *eternal agonies of despair*, which He foresaw must come upon the rebellious, if left without redemption *to increase for ever in guilt!* No one would venture to say this; for in *such* a substitution there would have been *no gain*,—consequently *no wisdom.* Indeed it would be awfully derogating from His infinite wisdom and merit, to suppose, that He could in no way make atonement for the sins of mortals without such endurance. It was *infinite dignity*, united with human nature suffering on the Cross, which gave such inconceivable value to His sacrifice, and which, with His obedience, "magnified the Law and made it honourable." It was thus, that "by one offering, He finished" that stupendous plan, through which "God can now be just, and yet justify the ungodly, who repent and believe in Jesus." Here is a work of divine

wisdom, which *angels have desired to look into;* but which saints and angels will contemplate with increasing wonder and joy for ever.

The *benevolence* of God is likewise conspicuously manifested in the sufferings of Christ. It is true, that in the other works of God there are many indications of divine benevolence. In the glorious canopy of the heavens—in the splendid and orderly arrangement of the sun, moon, and unnumbered stars—and in the rich and varied garniture, which is spread over the face of the earth—we see every where evidences of good design—evidences that God delights in the happiness of His creatures. But still, it is to be considered, that all this beautiful and glorious structure of the heavens and earth was fitted up without any *expense* on the part of Deity—without any *sacrifice* on the part of God. God was infinitely rich and powerful. He had only to *speak, and it was done.* He had only to *command*, and the pillars of heaven, as well as the foundations of earth, "stood fast." He had only to put forth an effort of *His will*, and earth and skies were clothed in grandeur and beauty. So that in doing all this there was no expense, or sacrifice, on the part of God, to demonstrate His benevolence.

But O, when we come to the stupendous work of man's redemption —when we come to behold the Son of God expiring in agony on the Cross,—here we find a perfect demonstration of Divine benevolence. Here we find the Great God our Creator actually making a sacrifice of what was most dear to Him, for the benefit of His creatures. Here we find the Great Father of mercies, "that He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us," actually surrendering His own Son to death, that we might live! God "SPARED NOT HIS OWN SON, BUT DELIVERED HIM UP FOR US ALL!" Here is benevolence indeed! And what renders the benevolence of this sacrifice still more conspicuous is, that it was a giving away from God for the benefit of His *enemies!*—for the benefit of those, who were impious *rebels* against His holy Government, and *deserving* nothing better than "*banishment from His presence.*" Here is a manifestation of Divine benevolence infinitely above all human experience or conception. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends; but God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet enemies, Christ died for us."

The *justice* of God is likewise conspicuously manifested in the sufferings of Christ. Had there been no Mediator between God and rebel man—had the punishment of sin fallen directly upon the head of the transgressors—it would have been only an act of common justice—only what might have been expected, as a matter of course, from the

character of God's Law. It could not have been considered by superior beings as any very extraordinary exhibition of Divine justice, had this little world with all its guilty population been consigned to hell! Among the multitude of other worlds, which still maintained their allegiance to the Most High, this lost province might, in the course of ages, have been forgotten. In the revolution of eternal ages, even angels might have forgotten, that their God was "a God of justice"; and thus other angels might have been lifted up with pride; and the inhabitants of other worlds might have been tempted to rebel against their rightful Sovereign. And thus, in the course of ages, one spirit of disaffection and revolt might have spread through all the kingdoms and provinces of Jehovah's empire.

But when, (as the case now stands)—when, instead of the punishment's falling directly upon the transgressors, its equivalent, in significancy and importance, is sustained by One, who is known in all worlds—when, after our dreadful revolt, the Angel of the Covenant is seen bending from His throne, and hastening His downward way, and interposing His own person between the avenging stroke of Divine Law and crimes of our revolted world;—and when there is no holding back of that stroke—but all its weight—all its vengeance comes upon Him, as our Substitute—when "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all"—Oh! here is an exhibition of Divine justice, which can never be forgotten! Here is an exhibition, which must strike a solemn awe of God's justice throughout all worlds, and be remembered for ever!

Thus in the sufferings of Christ the character of God is gloriously displayed. His *wisdom*, His *benevolence*, His *justice*, are all conspicuously, and at the same time harmoniously manifested. Here "mercy and truth have met together,—righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Ought not Christ, then, to have suffered these things? Yes, verily "it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." This leads me to observe,

IV. In consequence of the sufferings of Christ, we have reason to believe, that all holy beings are inspired with entire confidence in the stability and excellency of God's government; and will thus be kept in their allegiance to His throne.

Previous to the sufferings of Christ, there was no such experimental proof, as we now have, but that God might change His purposes, and

relax the severity of His judgments, should increasing multitudes rebel against Him. It is true that rebel angels had been thrown from heaven "into chains of darkness." But this was no demonstration, that other, and mightier, and more beloved angels, should they rebel, would be punished with like severity. But when He, who is higher and mightier than all angels, and infinitely more beloved than all created intelligences—when HE experienced the wrath of the Almighty Father, on placing himself in the room of sinners—O then a demonstration was given, that the demands of Eternal Justice would never be relaxed on account of the might, or the multitude, or the endeared relation of those who might be found in the attitude of rebellion. When even HE, standing in the room of sinners, must *of necessity* suffer—when His earnest and repeated prayer, "O my Father, *if it be possible*, let this cup pass from me"—could avail nought to mitigate "the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" against sin—when that dreadful prophecy, "MESSIAH shall be cut off, but not for himself," is literally executed—here is demonstration, surely, that even Gabriel, or all the glorious company of angels, should they rebel, would incur the unmitigated severities of Jehovah's vengeance. So that the mightiest created beings will henceforth stand in awe of the Divine Majesty, and thus be held in their allegiance to His throne.

But it is not merely by a reverential view of God's justice, that holy beings are now bound to His throne. For, as has been seen, in the sufferings of Christ they have a demonstration, too, of the *benevolence* of God, such as was never before given. They perceive that "God is Love"—*Infinite* Love—that He delights in the happiness of His creatures—is ready to make a tremendous sacrifice to promote their happiness. They are thus convinced, that His government is infinitely good, holy, and wise;—that therefore it is for their own interest, and glory,—as well as for the glory of God,—to remain obedient and faithful subjects of His government. Thus it is, that angels and all holy beings are inspired with full confidence in the Divine government, and are bound to the Eternal Throne by cords of love, as well as of fear. And this train of thought is in perfect accordance with the Scriptures of God, "Who created all things by Jesus Christ, *to the intent*, that now unto the *Pincipalities and Powers in heavenly places* might be known by the Church," (that is, *by means of the redeemed Church*,) "the manifold wisdom of God."

And now, in review, if a multitude which no man can number, are thus redeemed from sin and misery, and raised to heaven, and confirmed for ever in glory and blessedness; if the character of God is

thus illustriously displayed in view of the Universe; and if Jehovah's empire is thus established for ever, in the love, fear, and confidence of all holy intelligences;—*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?* If all this is gained by His short period of humiliation and suffering, was there not *infinite wisdom and propriety in the great Sacrifice?*

Estimate the value of *one* redeemed soul, growing for ever in the knowledge and likeness of God; estimate the value of *unnumbered millions* of such souls; estimate the amount of *joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth*; estimate the bliss of *all angelic minds*, when they see *all the ransomed of the Lord return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads;* estimate the amount of *their eternal joy* and the *stability of their confidence*, when they behold the *glory of God, as it shines from the Cross of Christ;* estimate the amount of bliss for ever springing in the *Eternal Mind*, from the reflection, that *His throne is established, unchangeably, in the love, and fear, and firm confidence of all holy intelligences;*—and tell me, poor sinner, would you rather that this great Sacrifice had not taken place?—would you rather that the Son of God had sat for ever on His throne, than thus descend, to rise with this infinitely greater manifestation of Glory?—this immeasurably wider diffusion of blessedness? Estimate, at one view, the full amount of what we already know has been gained by the sufferings of Christ, and tell me,—can you help receiving, with liveliest faith, the Divine testimony, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory?"

Other objects, without doubt, have been gained by the sufferings of Christ, of which God hath not yet told us. "We here see but in part, and we know but in part." But we see enough to make us exclaim, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." And if we have one sentiment worthy of man, we see enough to make us ardent in our aspirings, hereafter to look into that Heaven of heavens, where the glories of Redemption will be more peculiarly revealed, and where the Lord God Almighty may be for ever unfolding to our view those plans which occupy His Infinite Mind!

REFLECTIONS.

1. From this subject we are led to admire the character of God's Government.

He governs good men—he governs angels—not by physical strength, but by Moral influence—not by an arm of arbitrary power, but by appealing to the noblest sympathies of Moral nature. He does not command his Potentates to take their stations, and keep worlds in awe by thunders of Despotism. But he sends forth His own Son, in the mild majesty of the Prince of Peace; and he makes His angels ministering spirits. "In the fulness of time," he selects our world, as a theatre, on which to make one grand exhibition of His own character—calculated to secure the love, respect, and confidence of all worlds. And thus good beings, in all worlds, are made obedient and loyal subjects, from choice;—not by force. This is emphatically a *free* Government. This is a kind of government worthy of rational beings, and worthy of God.

2. From this subject we are led to mourn, how exceedingly limited are the views of those, who think that the only object of Christ's coming into our world was, "to publish a good system of *morality!* and to set us a *good example!*"

How exceedingly limited and pitiable are their thoughts of Christ! O, ye men of reason, who yet see no grandeur in the heights of Calvary;—commune with your Bible—commune with your God—if peradventure ye may yet "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" and may, like learned Paul, be brought to count all human science "but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord."

3. We learn, how very imperfect are the views of those, who suppose, that the *only* object of Christ's coming into our world was to *save sinners*.

This was indeed one great object, and worthy of our endless gratitude:—But Oh, what is the salvation of millions who creep on earth?—what is this, compared with those glorious displays of God's character?—or compared with that eternal confidence in His government, which is inspired among the loftier and wider provinces of His empire? Sinners can now accept the offered grace, and angels will rejoice, and give glory to the Lamb; or sinners can now despise the Saviour's dying love, and *trample on His blood!* but those same angels will raise the awful halleluiah, That *the Lord God Omnipotent reigns in justice, though the smoke of their torment ascend up for ever and ever!*

4. We learn, in the next place, from this subject, that we ought not to distrust the wisdom of Providence, even in those events which seem *dark and mysterious*.

Little did the mourning disciples think, when their Lord was crucified and buried, that from the darkness of Calvary a Light of Redemption was bursting forth on our ruined race! And little do *we* think, when clouds of fearful portent may seem to hang round our Churches, and when thick darkness broods over more than half the nations—little perhaps do we think, what a Spirit of lightning from on high may soon break forth to electrify and purify our Zion;—what showers of heavenly influence may soon descend, to flow out in streams of salvation through the world! But let us never despair. Let our fervent supplication ascend up continually,—*Arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place, thou and the Ark of thy strength; make the voice of truth to be heard by those who would wrest the crown from thy head; make the voice of truth to be heard by the slumbering millions; and make thy name glorious over all the earth.*

5. From this subject let Christians be provoked to *self-denying sacrifices* in the cause of humanity, and untiring *devotedness* to the Saviour.

Says St. Paul, "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead; and that *He died* for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him, that died for them and rose again." O Christian—knowing the terrors of the Almighty, when pressing heavily upon a poor convinced sinner; knowing the only Saviour, who could remove that heavy load of guilt; knowing the only Rock of Safety amid the terrors of a crumbling Universe; having seen the glory of a reconciled Jehovah, "as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ;" can you ever cease to pray, that others also may build on that Everlasting Rock—and that "we all, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the Glory of God, may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord?" Having stood on Mount Calvary, and seen, with an eye of faith, that great Sacrifice, which fills heaven with adoring wonder and praise; having "entered into the holiest by the blood of Jesus;" and held "communion with His Father and your Father—with His God and your God;" and having a "name written in the Lamb's book of life," for your security when "worlds are burnt up,"—can you now shrink from any effort, which might make an ungodly world to feel, that there is Foundation to the Christian's faith?—Can you decline any sacrifice, which might quicken the wings of "the Angel having the everlasting Gospel to preach?" Remember, brethren, *your* responsibility is greatly increased by your *knowledge of duty* and your *personal relation* to the Saviour. Possibly a thousand fold heavier weight of responsibility rests upon you, than upon your rich and cove-

tous neighbours. Now, then, when the Redeemer's Great Promise is fulfilling—when His Spirit is hovering around us, and is beginning to move on nations long enveloped in darkness;—let there be a moving Army of the faithful;—let our "youth of promise," and all "the saints bestir themselves like angels;"—let the ministers of God be "flames of fire;"—from the "high places of Zion" let there be a going forth of all that is elevated in thought, and bold in enterprise, and self-denying in piety, for shaking this poor drowsy world, and bursting away from it the chains of darkness and hell, and reclaiming its enslaved nations to the holy empire of God. And do thou "gird on thy sword, O Most Mighty;"—make the *groans of the prisoners* to be heard by the sleeping *Churches purchased by thy blood;* and make thy last Command Omnipotent, as the trump of Judgment, over all the selfishness, hypocrisy, and pride of men.

6. From this subject let the wicked and the worldling, amid the blaze of gospel light, be constrained to repent and believe.

Sinner, *look on Him, whom you have pierced, and mourn.* Can not the love of Christ dissolve your soul in sympathy and penitence? When he poured out that blood, "which was to sprinkle many nations," all Nature seemed to sympathize in His sufferings. And why did the rocks rend? why did the earth quake? why did the dead awake? why did the sun hide in darkness? why did the Eternal Son assume our nature, and expire in agony? It was that He might redeem rebels, such as we are, from *eternal burnings*, and wash them from guilt in His *own blood*, and clothe them in the splendour and *likeness of their Redeemer.* And have you no gratitude? Is your heart harder than the rocks, which rent asunder!—more insensible than the dead, who started from their tombs! Ponder well the bloody theme. For "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin;" and *never* will you repent—*never* will you abhor sin—*never* will you love Christ—if not when standing by His Cross, and "beholding how *He loved us.*" Was ever love like this? The Son of God yielding to death, "*for your sakes!*" And what a Death! It was not that "His face sweat as it were great drops of blood;"—not that His hands, and feet, were *nailed to the accursed tree;*—not that His head was *crowned with thorns*, and His body pierced by the *soldier's sword.*—It was "the hour of the travail of His SOUL!"—It was the hour, when He, whose "sword is bathed in heaven," cried, "AWAKE, O SWORD, AGAINST MY SHEPHERD, AND AGAINST THE MAN THAT IS MY FELLOW."—Enter into the meaning of those words, coming, as they do, from the mouth of the

Almighty! Think of that sword of Omnipotence, descending with its dreadful weight upon God's own Son! and remember, *He was our Substitute!* "He was wounded for *our* transgressions; He was bruised for *our* iniquities; the chastisement of *our* peace was upon Him; and by *His* stripes *we* are healed." Blessed Jesus! and didst thou *voluntarily bow thine head* beneath the stroke, and thus finish thy part of the Holy Covenant?—and shall we not repent of sin, and believe on thy name?

In view of that Covenant, sealed with blood, does one heart still linger, and "go after its covetousness!"—"RETURN UNTO ME, FOR I HAVE REDEEMED YOU, SAITH THE LORD." It would seem as though in view of such a Treaty, issuing in broad characters from Heaven, and ratified with blood on earth, a wicked world would, at once, give up their rebellion, and would say with one voice, "Lord, we do return to thy kingdom." O haste, then, sinner, hasten, with true penitence and faith, to lay hold on that Covenant-promise, for to-morrow may be too late. "God is angry with the wicked every day." "His Spirit shall not always strive." And you never hear His *thunder*, till the *lightning* has *struck!* O haste, then, "to be found in Him, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named," for there is no other Refuge from the thunder of His indignation!

Fellow-sinner, take in good part this lengthened expostulation; for "precious blood" has been shed! and other *blood* is at stake betwixt thee and me. I now leave thee at the foot of the Cross. *There* only is mercy. And "*to-day*" only is there any *promise* of forgiveness to the penitent. Then "seize the kind promise;" for "we know not what shall be on the morrow." *To-day*,—all ungrateful and rebellious as thou hast hitherto been, thou canst not open thy Bible, without being struck with the affecting truth, that the kindest words that ever dropped from the lips of God or angel, are addressed directly to thyself;—"*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.*"—But *to-morrow*, "this gospel of the kingdom may be taken from thee."—Or rather, that Holy Spirit, who alone can "guide thee into all truth," may be withdrawn,—and thou be left to "*believe a lie.*" I hear a more than mortal Voice whispering, that even this day's announcement must be to each of us "a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death." If the benevolent groans of Calvary, which shook the earth and darkened the heavens, do not move our hearts, and establish our faith,—we do know, that every echo of those groans, that falls on our ear, must aggravate our condemnation, when the earth and heavens are dissolving! God of Judgment! "who amongst us shall abide the day of thy com-

ing!"—when our own works, and our holiest Ordinances do testify against us!

7. The reflection very naturally follows, that *incorrigible* sinners must be punished with immeasurable severity.

Say not, in hardening impenitence—"It will surely be well with the wicked, because God is merciful." We see to what results even the *mercy* of God *may* lead! It was *Infinite Mercy*, that burst *in thunder* on Calvary!—and wakened that agonizing cry, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME!" And sinner, "if these things be done in the Green Tree, what shall be done in the dry?" If Infinite Love could thus reveal itself in almighty vengeance on the Son of God, "who knew no sin," but only deigned to be our Substitute;—Oh, in what untold vengeance must it come on those, who are *personally guilty!*—especially if their guilt is aggravated a thousand fold by a wilful rejection of the All-Glorious Substitute! As you value life, then,—or as you fear death eternal—beware how you trifle with *blood!*—beware how you trifle with the *mercy of God*, revealed in the *death of His Son*. "Whosoever shall fall on this Stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever It shall fall, It shall grind him to powder." In the most benevolent deed that the Heavens ever witnessed, God has demonstrated to the Universe, *that iniquity can not go unpunished*. And having thus strikingly demonstrated, that *misery* is not inconsistent with *mercy*,—who shall dare to say,—(in opposition to God's word,)—that He will not eternally magnify "the riches of His glory in them that are saved," and in the view of all holy beings, by permitting them "to go forth and look upon the carcasses of them that have transgressed—where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched"—because they "have despised our Lord Jesus Christ?" If God failed not "to show His wrath, and make His power known," when *His own Son* was to be the victim,—and when angels started back with amazement,—think you that His abhorrence of sin will become all mildness, and pity, and weakness,—when His *incorrigible enemies* are to be the victims?—and when millions of angels are crowding round, to witness His truth, and to adore His justice! O ye blind guides—ye traitors! who cry, "Peace, peace,—when there is no peace, saith my God to the wicked;"—ye murderers! who would launch your fellows into a boundless ocean, under all their weight of guilt!—give back your delusions to "the father of lies;" "for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:" For "where the tree falleth, there it shall be:"—then "he that is filthy, let him be filthy still."

Finally, Christian brethren, we learn from this subject the great propriety of frequently commemorating the dying of the Lord Jesus.

We think it proper, in a suitable manner, to commemorate great names, and great events. The noblest feelings of our nature are thus improved. And frozen be the heart that would withhold due respect from the illustrious dead! Well then, here is "a Name, that is above every name that is named." Here is One, who, "by the offering of Himself," has released millions from the bondage of Satan, and from the pains of the second death; and raised them to the "liberty of the sons of God." Here is an Event, the blessed influence of which is now felt in both worlds, and will extend for ever. Here is the consummation of a Treaty, which binds together the Heavens and the Earth—which restores man to communion with his Maker—which breaks for ever the power of Satan—which unites in one grand Confederacy the wise and good of all ages, all nations, and all worlds;—and which acknowledges the SUPREMACY OF HIM, "whose Right it is to reign over all." In comparison with this Name and this Event, then, let names of Patriots and venerated Statesmen be forgotten—Let the ever memorable day of a Nation's birth be commemorated no more: But O, let the great Sacrifice of Him, who conquered *Death and Hell*, and reconciled Earth and Heaven, be often commemorated. Let these sacred memorials "show forth the Lord's death, till He come." And when, amid the wreck of worlds, this *theatre of blood* shall be seen no more, we will sing, with the "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, WORTHY IS THE LAMB, THAT WAS SLAIN, TO RECEIVE POWER, AND RICHES, AND WISDOM, AND STRENGTH, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY, AND BLESSING; FOR THOU HAST REDEEMED US TO GOD BY THY BLOOD, OUT OF EVERY KINDRED, AND TONGUE, AND PEOPLE, AND NATION."

That song is already begun. It will swell with louder and still louder notes for ever. That song tells, in few words, the full meaning of the Ordinance before us. But O, how distressing the thought, that multitudes around perceive not its meaning. The god of this world now blinds their eyes, and hardens their hearts. They cling to earth—"feed on ashes"—"grasp at wind."—But whenever their eyes shall be savingly opened—when Heaven, with all its grandeurs, shall appear as desirable as a little spot of earth, or a breath of applause; when Hell with all its horrours, and the soul for ever lost, shall be as appalling as the loss of property; then will they cling to the Cross of Christ;—then will they joyfully commemorate that Death, through which believers live,—through which God is glorified,—and through which angels are bound to His throne.

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Go....Teach all Nations....*Mat.* xxviii, 19.

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SERMON II.

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THE UTILITY OF PRAYER.

JOB xxi. 15.—*What profit should we have, if we pray unto him?*

THE utility of prayer, which, according to this scripture, wicked men dispute, the present discourse humbly attempts to demonstrate. This might be quickly done, by showing that God requires men to pray; for God, being infinitely perfect, cannot prescribe a useless or vain service. Consent, however, to the utility of prayer, so obtained, would be grounded on the presumption of its usefulness, not on the vivid perception of the intrinsic evidences of its utility. The former kind of consent is not the most desirable. The heart is never completely and permanently won to truth, but by the perception of its inherent excellence. When we have convinced men that God has required any thing, they are bound to admit its excellence or utility. But before we can effectually commend it to their joyful concurrence, their complacency and love, we must present to their minds the proofs of its essential excellence. This is what I now propose to do in relation to prayer.

Two things let me premise: First, that I speak only of *true* prayer; not the prayer of formality, nor of enthusiasm, nor of selfish anxiety; but that prayer which offers up the heart's desires unto God with repentance, and faith, and true submission—Secondly; that in nothing which I say concerning the inherent tendencies and the influence of

prayer, do I intend an exclusion of the Holy Spirit's agency in this exercise, although I do not any where distinctly mention it. The object of the discourse requires no reference to that agency; it being an examination, not of the nature of the Holy Spirit's operation, but of the product thence resulting. These things premised, I remark, that the utility of prayer is comprehended;

IN ITS DIRECT TENDENCY TO IMPROVE THE HUMAN CHARACTER;

IN ITS COUNTERACTING INFLUENCE ON WHATEVER TENDS TO INJURE THAT CHARACTER;

IN ITS EFFICACIOUS INFLUENCE ON WHATEVER IS FAVOURABLE TO IT; AND

IN ITS PERSUASIVE INFLUENCE ON THE GREAT SOURCE OF BLESSEDNESS HIMSELF.

I. Prayer, more than any other means, is adapted, in its own nature, to improve all the powers and properties of the human soul.

Without a countervailing influence, the soul of man will always acquire the character of the objects, with which it has intercourse. If those objects be great, they will leave the stamp of greatness; if good, the stamp of goodness on the soul:—the stamp of littleness, on the other hand, if the objects be little, and of baseness, if they be base.

Again, the soul is more or less strongly impressed with the image of objects, accordingly as it contemplates them more or less directly and intensely. He who regards a thing through the medium of historical information, will be less affected by it, than he who with his own eye sees it: and he who looks at an object closely and minutely, will have a deeper and more exact impression of it, than he who casts towards it one or two glances.

Experience thoroughly confirms these observations. Look the world over, and find the individual, whose mind and moral character do not correspond to the objects, about which his thoughts and affections have been most employed. Is there any truer proverb, than that "he who walketh with wise men shall be wise, and the companion of fools be destroyed?" To know what a man is, it is necessary but to know what company he keeps, what persons and things he has chosen to be familiar with; and as his familiarity with them has been greater or less. so it is certain, that he bears, more or less perfectly, their image, whether good or evil.

But if these remarks be incontrovertible, so likewise is the utility of prayer. Prayer is an exercise of the soul. It expresses the state of the soul in intercourse with God. With God, did I say? Most certainly so; it is to no other than God, supremely Good and Glorious, to whom the soul elevates herself in prayer—elevates not only her intellect, but her conscience, her affections, her sympathies—her whole immortal and ethereal self;—not to speculate—but to adore—to commune—to breathe out her love, and desires and longings, into the very bosom and heart of the High and Lofty One. What mode of intercourse more direct, more intimate, more affectionate, or better adapted to acquire the image of the Object?

But let us consider the nature of this high intercourse more particularly. The different parts of prayer require correspondent acts and affections of mind, which comprise the substance of all moral excellence, and which prayer, by frequently calling them forth, tends, beyond every thing else, to invigorate and mature. Prayer is adoration: And when are the divine perfections so likely to expand the soul with the ardours of holy love and delight, as when brought distinctly before her eye in this heavenly employment? The philosopher may be indevout, while he traces these perfections in the frame of nature; and the theologian may coldly speculate and discourse concerning them as exhibited in scripture. But he who fixes a firm and single eye on God in prayer, and dwells on one attribute and another with adoring admiration, will not be long unconscious of that pure flame, in which are blended all the elements of virtue and happiness.—Prayer is confession of sin: And when is sin more apt to melt the heart into the soft relentings of godly contrition, than when carefully recounted to Him against whom it has all been committed, with a spirit awed into reverence and submission by the pure majesty of the Divine Presence? You may speak lightly of sin, when your words are directed to the sinful ear of a creature like yourself; but get you into some solitary place, and set the Lord distinctly and immediately before you; and spread out your offences before His undefiled eye; and under His pure and piercing gaze, lay your heart and life open;—and I see not how you are ever to become repentant, if your sorrows do not then begin to flow forth.—Prayer is supplication for mercy, grounded upon the blood of Christ, and the promises, which in him are yea and amen: And if ever the heart hath advantages for becoming all subdued and possessed by the sentiments and feelings, which those wonders of divine love should excite, it is now. Men may speak to one another of these subjects with as little sensibility as they feel towards common

things: but when the soul collects herself, and comes, and, convinced of her guilt, stands trembling and pleading before her great Judge, and tells Him of His professed clemency and graciousness, and how His own Son hath loved her, and how He Himself hath said, and sworn, that for His worthy Son's sake He will withhold no blessing from any humble contrite suppliant—what a resistless tendency hath all this to transfuse the soul with confidence, and faith, and full assurance of hope. —Prayer, finally, is thanksgiving for favours received: And, sure, if ever gratitude unfeigned and unextinguishable do glow in a mortal's breast, this is the occupation in which the ethereal passion is generated and nourished. You may be reminded that goodness and mercy have followed you all the days of your life, and look around you upon a thousand witnesses of the divine benignity still compassing you about; and your heart still be but little awake to its numberless and everlasting obligations. But not so, if, in a secret interview with your Father in heaven, you yourself tell over to Him but some few of the countless mercies which His hand hath been incessantly bestowing on you, since you first became the object of His providential and gracious care. Thus does it appear, how the various excellencies of holy character are instrumentally produced and promoted by means of this exercise: and it would appear more convincingly, if the time permitted more detail.

Now as it hence results, that a man, who lives a prayerful life, must be a man of transcendent loveliness and worth, we might be fairly required to subject our conclusion to the decisive test of fact and example. And we need not be unwilling to abide the trial. So much was the life of Enoch a life of prayer, so much did he acknowledge the divine presence, so intimately did he converse with his Maker at all times, that the Scripture, giving a brief description of this ancient prophet, declares, that he "walked with God." And so estimable and spiritual did that man's character become, that God, seeing the world was not worthy of him, translated him to heaven, that he should not taste of death. And of Elijah, another singular example of prayer, it is also testified, that the Lord took him up into heaven, not by death but by a whirlwind. And who knows not that in every age the best and brightest of men have been those, who approached nearest to these illustrious patterns of prayer? At this present time, there are persons, of but inferior parts and accomplishments, who by reason of great prayerfulness transcend, in moral worth, professors of high distinction and splendid gifts. Religionists, however exalted, who are not often with God in prayer, are but little profited themselves by all their

privileges; and but little profitable to others by all their intercourse with them; but, contrariwise, being persons of prayer by character, and not in fact, are stumbling-blocks to many; and are the principal causes of this world's incredulity in regard to the efficacy and usefulness of prayer. Great therefore and unparalleled is the direct tendency of prayer to improve the human character. But,

II. Its utility is further manifest, let me next remark, in its counteracting influence on whatever tends to injure that character.

If a thing proves its excellence by its own good tendency on what it directly exerts itself upon, it proves it still more by resisting and overcoming what has a contrary tendency—a tendency to counteract and neutralize the good it aims to accomplish. If a man show me friendship by coming to me with favours and benefits, he shows it further by defeating the designs of certain enemies who intend to rob me of them, as soon as I get them into my possession.

Now there are many things in this world always acting upon the soul with a most debasing and ruinous tendency; and there are no means of overcoming this tendency so efficacious as prayer.

To speak first generally;—there is an influence in worldly things so hostile to the things of the Spirit of God, as sometimes to make these latter things appear like empty shadows, or cunningly devised fables: and the mysteries of the everlasting gospel are as the superstitious stories which frighten credulous children; and judgment and eternity, heaven and hell, are words, by which crazed or criminal imaginations have expressed their fictions of happiness and horror. It needs no demonstration, that this is an influence utterly subversive of all religion and virtue—adapted to brutalize man's rational nature; and of course, if there be a future state in fact, to involve him in all its untold terrors and torments. Nor need I stay long to show, to what vast extent this baleful influence hath full and domineering ascendency over infatuated mankind; how, though there be but few professed skeptics and scorners, there are but a few whose lives do not preach skepticism from beginning to end;—which practical skepticism is, to all terrible intents, as bad as any other. Now to overcome this influence, there is no other way than to have the soul brought under a strong impression and bearing from spiritual things. By the very laws of mind, one impression or frame of spirit cannot be permanently displaced but by the introduction of another; and that other never can be generated, but in the presence of its appropriate object. Of necessity, therefore,

must the things of this world sway and debase the human mind, so long as the things of the invisible world do not exert themselves upon it. You must be exposed to the action of unseen things, or remain in unworthy bondage to things which are seen. You must be in such circumstances, that the spiritual glories of God and Christ, and the promises and threatenings of scripture, may pour their peculiar influence on your heart, or else you must remain the slave of mammon, and sordid drudge of the flesh.

Now it is almost unnecessary to remark, that there are no circumstances in which these objects are so nearly approached and so deeply felt, as when the soul solemnly betakes herself to the exercises of prayer. I grant that reading, and hearing, and conversing about divine things, rightly managed, may make profitable impressions, and should by no means be omitted. But there are thousands that read, and hear, and converse, and though some feeling may be generated, it passes over their minds as the little circles, produced by the falling pebble, pass over the surface of the smooth water. If those persons could be persuaded to try the influence of true and fervent prayer, they would find it more availing. Retired from the world, shut up alone with Him who dwelleth in secret, kneeling in His awful presence, fixing the heart for communicating and receiving, speaking to Him, and not of Him merely ;—Oh, this brings the unseen world into view, and casts earth into shade and emptiness ; this takes importance and reality off from temporal things, and puts those qualities on eternal and spiritual things ; this places the soul on the verge of eternity, and subjects her to the beams, and breezes, and blessed visions of heaven. Here there is hope of her losing her skepticism and worldliness. In these circumstances this world hath little power ; and it were not surprising, if he who habituates himself to an exercise like this, should soon have his conversation more in heaven than on earth, and his walk more with God than with men.

But it may show yet more forcibly the counteracting power of prayer, to consider its operation in some particular instances of its resistance to the world.

The world then, we all know, tends to make the sons and daughters of men light-minded ; and Levity is no ornament of man's rational being ; nor is it at all suited to our condition in a region full of dangers, and lamentations, and arrows of death ; neither is it compatible with our present or our eternal well-being. But how can levity stand before prayer ? Books and sermons may be unable to contend with it. You may tell me of those, who let no day pass without running through a

chapter, and no sabbath pass without a visit to the house of God, and yet have just as much of this world's vanity in their hearts, and gaiety in their looks, and giddiness in their lives, as other people. Further, I have heard professors gravely reason in defence of worldly levities, and reason themselves into a persuasion that they are, to say the least, innocent; and with this persuasion, they have freely gone into them, and led their unthinking offspring along with them in the wildering path. But what if these persons would but seek in prayer to know the way of duty?—what if they would try, whether they could keep the spirit of levity at the throne of grace?—or get leave of Him, who sitteth thereon, to be guided by that spirit?—What if they would go to our Father who is in secret, and ask His blessing upon their intended indulgencies?—or what if, after leaving their gay companions and diversions, they would go and tell Him of the way in which their time and faculties had been employed, to see whether it would be sanctioned by the uplifted light of His countenance! How could levity endure such experiment? How manifestly must a man of true prayer be a man of pure and permanent sobriety; serene and settled, and cheerful without lightness.

Again, the world often fills the bosoms of men with avarice and ambition; under the former of which they make haste to be rich, and under the latter to be great; under either, or both, to be undone—since the love of money is a root of all evil; and since they have no heart to believe the gospel, who receive honour one of another.

Would you then regard that as a useless thing, which has a tendency to eradicate these base passions from the hearts of men? But if men would give themselves to prayer, they would soon cease to be the slaves of these passions. Prayer would quickly dethrone and banish these guilty usurpers of dominion over the immortal minds of men. If men would acknowledge God in all their ways, God himself would be their ruler and guide; and his Holy Spirit would hold the throne of their hearts. If, before they undertake their plans and enterprises, they would submit them, with the calmness and seriousness of pure devotion, for the approbation of him, on whom they depend for success, how many of them would they relinquish, and with what moderation would they prosecute the rest! Seest thou a man hurrying, and scrambling, and scuffling for the pelf or the praise of this world? Assuredly thou seest a prayerless soul; professor or not, he is a prayerless soul:—one who, if he deals at all with God in prayer, deals with him only so far as to mock and insult him! A praying man knows too much concerning the true riches, and the honour which cometh from God, to discover such miserable infatu-

ation for the things of an hour. To such a man it matters little, whether he rank with this world's rich or poor, its mighty or its mean. Riches cannot exalt, nor poverty depress him; honours cannot elate him, nor reproaches break his heart. He dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty—afraid neither for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day.

Once more, the world is full of blinding and infatuating influences, whereby the ears of men are turned away from the truth and are turned unto fables; and some have one doctrine and some another; while the ungodliness of others takes occasion from the variance, to renounce all religious opinions, and to hold every thing pertaining to God and another world uncertain, unsettled, and incapable of ever being placed on any sure basis. Such confusion and doubt hath human depravity engendered in a world to which God's oracles have been given for a guide and directory in the way of truth! Nevertheless, men must be extricated from this labyrinth, as they would be either sanctified or saved. As salvation is inseparable from holiness, so is holiness from the belief of the truth. They have pleasure in unrighteousness who believe not the truth, and against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, the everlasting wrath of God is revealed from heaven.

Yet they plead the impossibility of knowing what is truth. The Bible cannot satisfy them; books cannot satisfy them; sermons but multiply their difficulties; and what are they to do? The Eternal Source of truth hath informed them, that they would arrive at certainty, if they would but cease their rebellion against God. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." It is nothing but the spirit of disobedience that subjects any man to the domination of heresy and delusion. But not to enter on the proof of this, in its universal scope, I affirm, that obedience to God, in the single article of prayer, will prove a sure touchstone of truth, and an impregnable defence to the soul against all the innovations of ruinous opinions and dogmas. The soul in prayer stands too near the Fountain of light and truth to be invaded by the fatal infections of error. Her temper, in this exercise, is incongenial to every thing in error's likeness, and shrinks away from its polluting approach, as modesty recoils from the approach of impudence. Nothing certainly but pure truth is capable of being either relished or expressed by the spirit of genuine prayer. For the spirit of such prayer is the spirit of humility and submissiveness, of heavenly sincerity and holy love; and how with such a spirit can any falsehood have agreement? On such a spirit light will be poured from all nature, as well as from the providence, and book, and Spirit of God. And hence the

common observation, that good men always think alike in prayer. Nor is prayer an unthoughtful business. Much of intellect, as well as feeling, is breathed forth in true devotion; nay from almost every true prayer an epitome of the gospel might be extracted.

Wherefore nothing is more unfounded than the pretence of not being able to come to the knowledge of the truth in the midst of this world's jargon of opinions. There is a sure and an easy way; nor is the existence of that destructive jargon resolvable into any thing else, than the world's forgetfulness of God, and known character for prayerlessness. Let no one question it, that prayer universally tried, would unite the whole world, substantially, in the same mind and judgment, nor leave any man doubtful as to an essential article of faith. Thou, that hearest this announcement, art perhaps an unsettled, unhappy skeptic; yet desirest not to be so, and hast long tried to convince thyself. Thou hast read; thou hast disputed; and thou hast listened, in hope that thy doubts might be dissipated. I will not question that thou hast done all this; but full well I know, there is one thing thou hast not done. Thou hast not disinterred thy heart out of this world's pollutions and vanities. Thou hast been living in the spirit and in the ways of them who fear not God. It hath not been thy daily delight to enter into thy closet and shut thyself in from all earthly society, and then bow down thy spirit before His presence who seeth in secret. Hadst thou done but this, thou wouldst not have been now a tired wanderer, near eternity's dread brink, with a mind full of doubt, void of fixed hope, aching with ungratified desire, and anon shivering with apprehension of what may yet befall.

III. Thus have I considered the influence of prayer in counteracting the debasing and soul-destroying tendencies of the world. There are other tendencies favourable to the soul's welfare, and I now wish to show briefly the efficacious influence of prayer upon these.

I begin with the word of God. That word is, in its unresisted applications to the heart, quick and powerful, and as the fire and the hammer which breaketh the rock in pieces. It is perfect, converting the soul; sure, making wise the simple; right, rejoicing the heart; pure, enlightening the eyes—but the time would fail me to repeat a small part of what inspiration hath spoken in its praise. It is nevertheless powerless independently of prayer; for, however great its excellencies, prayerlessness will either keep them out of view, or turn them into deformities and stumbling-blocks. What are the beauties of the rainbow, or the beams of the sun to the blind man? And who more blind, though voluntarily so, than the prayerless soul? What was the glory

of the Only Begotten of the Father to the earthly-minded Jews, when He dwelt among them, full of grace and truth? And what, also, are the wonders of Truth and Wisdom in sacred scripture, to those who are so swayed by an obstinate will, that they cast off fear, and restrain prayer to God. Depravity can see no beauty in holiness; and who are depraved, if not the prayerless? When such persons have read the Bible, till they have it all in their memories, what are they better? Which hath the greater charms in their eye, God's truth or their riches? Salvation or the pleasures of sin? I have known of such great readers, who seemed to have learned by their researches, how to cavil and blaspheme, or to play the bigot or the fanatic—such miserable fruit of their labour came of their not mixing prayer with it. Even the renewed find prayer still indispensable to a profitable meditation in scripture. Remaining pollution will blind their eye, if the anointing of the Holy One be not constantly sought; and therefore, though the sacred pages lie open before them, and though they have once been truly enlightened to understand them; they shall not, without unremitted prayer, continue to behold the wonders of God's law.

But the Bible is not the only book, that may profit the soul of man. There are profound treatises on every subject of theology and morals, in which treasures of light and learning are contained for the edification of mankind; and here, where man speaks to man, what can hinder the acquisition of benefit by the diligent student? Without meaning to discourage deep study, let me rather ask, what can hinder its resulting fatally, if prayer be restrained? It matters not what the subjects of human thought are,—if intellect alone be conversant with them—if the other faculties of the soul—the conscience, the will, the affections—be not duly exercised—the reign of depravity, instead of being overthrown, is established. And the danger is not imaginary, that in deep and retired studies these other faculties will not be proportionately engaged. Those pastors know this, whose souls are kept in an almost constant stretch of thought, in order to get food, intellectual and spiritual, for their flocks, that else would starve for lack of knowledge. Many think their lives easy, and their labour well rewarded, if they are just kept out of want: but these know little of mental travail; which, in our case, while it is all for the profit of others, greatly endangers our own spiritual state. We have to think so much for them, that often we have hardly time for prayer; unless we think and pray at once; and yet nothing but prayer can keep our thinking from withering up the life of our personal godliness. Study, in short, will much advance the soul, if it be conducted with a prayerful spirit; but if prayer be slighted,

while study accumulates knowledge, it also genders spiritual leanness and impotence; and it is well if it prove not a savour of death unto death at last.

Thus, also, as to the divine ordinance of publick preaching—that ordinance by means of which more hath been done for man's spiritual interest than by all other means beside. A man may make his boast of having the ablest minister in the land, and of hearing habitually the most clear and pungent discourses that the human tongue hath ever pronounced; and yet the good of every sermon may be lost to that man, for want of the spirit of prayer in his hearing. For what though the seed be the best, and be sown with the greatest diligence, if it fall upon hard-beaten, or stony, or thorny ground? Now there is no other way of preparing the ground of the heart for the seed of the word, than prayer; and no other influence but that, which prayer draws down upon the soul, can make that seed vegetate and yield fruit. A church-going man, who is not also a man of prayer, has no better reason to expect spiritual benefit from the ordinances of grace, than a husbandman has to expect a harvest, who plants his grain and leaves his field an unfenced common. It is he who enters his closet before he comes to the house of God, and prays in secret before he takes his place in the public assembly, and keeps still praying while the word is sounding powerfully in his ear, and forgets not another retreat to his private chamber after dismission from the courts of the Lord—this is the man, who grows, and thrives, as every one ought, under the ministrations of the word.

The same necessity is there for prayer to make providential dispensations available to the advancement of man's salvation. For though adversities have a tendency to draw him away from the idolatry of the world, and mercies should lift his affections to their glorious Source, yet all experience testifies, that the former will only sink him into sullen melancholy or fretfulness, and the latter infatuate him with pride and self-sufficiency, unless he keep near to God in the exercises of prayer.

Thus, besides ennobling man's soul, by its own proper and direct influence; and keeping other influences from injuring it, by resisting and overcoming them, prayer is of this further utility, that it makes all favourable influences secure of their end. And now, whether, taking these things together, there be not good reason to esteem prayer useful,—none I think can doubt, except those who are resolved not to be convinced.

IV. But all the truth on this subject has not yet been told. Prayer

has another bearing—another kind of influence, than any which hath yet been considered. It has an influence, not only upon ourselves, and upon all the means and second causes, which tend either to our injury or advantage, but upon Him likewise, to whom it is addressed—upon the mind and conduct of God Himself.

So, most obviously, are we taught in holy scripture, especially in those winning words of Christ.—" What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things unto them that ask him." For, what are we to gather from this and many parallel texts, if the only influence of prayer is that, which it exerts either directly or indirectly upon ourselves? Is it consistent with any just rule of interpreting language, to give this, or any thing compatible with this, as the meaning of passages which represent God as bestowing benefits *in answer* to earnest supplication for them? How *in answer*, if the supplication hath no influence to procure them? Is it not clear, that any rendering of these passages, which admits not that prayer has in some way a persuasive influence on God, is a wresting,—not an explaining—of scripture,—adapted to make men heartless and cold n an exercise, which should never be otherwise than fervent.

Look at scriptural examples of prayer. When Jacob, after wrestling in this exercise till break of day, still refused to cease without a blessing, how far was he from supposing, that the only influence of prayer was that which it had on his own mind? Did those effectual prayers of Moses, which turned away wrath from rebellious Israel, even after God had threatened to destroy them, exert no influence except on Moses himself? Were those prayers of Elijah, which availed to shut, and afterwards to open heaven, without all influence, except on Elijah's own heart? And what shall we say of Abraham's prayer for Sodom? or Daniel's for Jerusalem? or that of the first Christians, which brought an angel down from heaven for St. Peter's enlargement? or, indeed, of any prayer in behalf of others, if the influence of prayer is confined to those who offer it?

And why should it be thought inconsistent with the infinite perfection of God, that He should be influenced by prayer? It is surely agreeable to God's perfection to love righteousness and hate iniquity, and give due expression of that love and hatred by distributing equal rewards and punishments. As well deny the being of God, as make Him indifferent to holiness and sin. But true prayer is holiness, and prayerlessness is sin. In him then who prays, God discerns something excellent.

something which, consistently with his perfection, he may approve and reward. In him who does not pray, God discerns something evil and hateful; and which therefore must draw forth His abhorrence and indignation. Just as a prodigal son, who asks forgiveness of his father, presents, in his penitent and submissive spirit, a reason, why his father should receive him to his arms;—a reason, it may be, that prevails; while another unreformed prodigal, who implores no forgiveness, presents no such reason, and receives no such favour.

But does not this doctrine make God changeable? Not more so, I first reply, than God's being influenced by the obstinacy of sinners suddenly and without remedy to destroy them; and by the holiness of his people, to smile upon them with complacency and loving kindness. But wherein, let me ask, consists the unchangeableness of God? Not in His being always entirely destitute of moral feeling; but in His feeling always alike towards the same objects in the same circumstances. God doubtless has perfectly pure and proper feeling toward all things. But all things being eternally present in His view, He is eternally and always in the same degree and manner affected by them.—The prayer that forms a reason for His showing favour at this moment, has always been before His infinite mind; and before it with all its present persuasive influence.

Nor is there any conflict between our doctrine of prayer and that of the divine purposes.—The purposes of God embrace all events, and embrace them in that very order in which they occur in time. If, in the order of actual occurrence, prayer always precedes the bestowal of blessings, it precedes it agreeably to the order of the divine purposes. If, in the purpose of God, prayer eternally stands present as the immediate condition of his favour, it were inconsistent, if things were not so, in event.

It does not appear, therefore, that we speak otherwise than soberly and truly, when we say, that prayer hath power with God. There is nothing in the word of God, nothing in His nature, nothing in His purposes, to discourage the hope of prevailing with Him by prayer. Far, infinitely far different is the fact. Hath the hungry child encouragement to hope he shall not ask his parent, in vain, for wholesome food? The most affectionate parent would sooner give such a child a stone for bread, or a scorpion for a fish, than the Father of mercies refuse his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. There is not in the universe a being, who, compared with God, hath any susceptibility to the influence of prayer. What emanations of love hath it drawn from His heart! What blessings of goodness from His hand! His mightiest acts have been

achieved in answer to prayer. "What terrible judgments have been averted; what mighty armies conquered; nay more, the very course of nature changed—the sun himself arrested—by the power of prayer!"—Who can assign the limits of that power? Who can tell what influence prayer hath had on the government of God in this world? But since all the parts of God's empire are united, its influence has travelled beyond earth's boundary, and is now exerting itself, and will exert itself for ever, on the far distant tracts of creation.

While I muse on this, Oh how refreshing and invigorating is the recollection, that at this present period, the smoke of the incense of prayer is rising up to heaven day and night from God's universal Church in the four quarters of the globe! Assuredly the time draws nigh of the restitution of all things. What wonders shall the arm of God presently achieve in fulfilment of the desires of his saints. Away fly all obstructions to the universal spread of Christian truth. Away pass the infidels and scorners of the day to their own proper places, and the gospel of the kingdom becomes the glory of all nations, and earth resounds with, "Alleluia, Salvation!" Transporting scene! and yet is it not possible, that some man may hear all this, and, without *gainsaying* it, remain unapprised of his private concern in the blest contemplation? Let me put thee in mind, then, my brother, that the end of hearing is practice; and that thou wilt be but a despiser of divine counsel, if thy life henceforth be not a life of true prayer. It depends upon thy conduct concerning prayer, how it is to fare with thy soul for ever. It depends upon this, whether thou find in God a friend or an enemy; and of course, whether all things shall work together for thy good or thy ruin. It may not, indeed, depend upon thy praying, whether the ordinary fruits of the divine bounty shall be bestowed or not. God's sunshine and rain are given to the praying and the prayerless; and even blasphemers and atheists riot on His exhaustless beneficence. But prayer makes this difference—that while temporal blessings become as wings, with which a praying man soars to his eternal rest: they become as millstones about the necks of the prayerless, with which they will be sunk down in the deep of eternal despair! "I will curse your blessings," saith He who gave them—"yea, I have cursed them already, because ye lay it not to heart to give God the glory." Whether thou prayest or not, a smooth full tide of prosperity may float thee along for a season; but a storm is gathering; and soon the current will turn against thee; and if thou art not a man of prayer, the proud waters shall overwhelm thee, and thy prosperity be thy destruction.

Nor can I suppress the apprehension, that thine own soul will not be the only victim of thy negligence in this prime regard. Thou standest not separate and alone from all the rest of the sons of men; but sustainest towards them relations through which, of necessity, thou exertest some influence, hurtful or happy, on their eternal condition. Art thou one in authority? Thine inferiors regarding thee perhaps, not only as higher, but as more knowing than themselves, learn from thy prayerlessness, that to cast off fear and restrain prayer to God is no crime, no disgrace, and of no ill consequence—Under which delusion thou art leading them on to the perdition of ungoldly men.—Art thou a parent? Then thine doubtless is one of the families that call not on the name of the Lord; and from all the exalting influences of prayer thine offspring, by thy fault, are withheld. And will they not, by the same means, be also withheld from grace and the inheritance of life? Art thou a member of the Church? Thy remissness in prayer exerts a secret influence to make the courts of Zion desolate, and her ways to mourn; and to take out of their places or obscure the brightness of her golden candlesticks. Art thou a minister of God? Thousands may go away to wail for ever in the prisons of darkness, because thou givest not thyself to the exercise of prayer. By that one neglect, thy thoughts are sensualized—thy discourses robbed of unction, thy walk before the saints made a snare and scandal, and all thy ministrations sadly marred and misdirected, if not utterly perverted. The prayerless man perisheth not alone in his iniquity.

A word, at parting, to the saints and faithful in Christ. Great, beloved brethren, and manifold are your privileges; but what I now would humbly call upon you to bear in constant remembrance, is the power which you, all impotent and helpless as you are in yourselves, can exert through prayer. The feeblest among you can chase a thousand—can put ten thousand to flight—can overcome the world—can elevate himself to higher honour than earth can give or appreciate. There is a kind of omnipotence in prayer; as having influence on Him who is Almighty. But why do I put you in mind of this? Not because I would have you inflate yourselves with pride; but because I remember that the spirit of prayer is altogether benevolent. Its power is unto the destruction of nothing but sin and its fruits. Its power hath the same scope and aim with that Glorious Being on whom it depends. Pure prayer's first accents are, "hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Faithful brethren, men of prayer, men who have power with God, forget not, I beseech you, what, by means of prayer, you are capable of accom-

plishing. The world's conversion hath not yet been achieved. *Means*, with that great end in purpose, have been long in operation, and have recently been much increased. What those means are, you know; and their powerlessness independently of God's blessing, you also know. I remind you again of your privilege, as endued with the spirit of grace and supplication. For Zion's sake, then, hold not your peace, for Jerusalem's sake rest not, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

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SERMON IV.

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Mat. xxviii. 18, 19, 20.—*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world.*

I rise to advocate the cause of missions to the heathen and to plead for a dying world. My sole object is to enforce the claims of five hundred millions of perishing men by some plain and simple arguments which have affected my own mind. And I have chosen this text because it contains some of the arguments and suggests the rest. Both the authority of Christ and his personal reward are here distinctly brought to bear on the subject. For his obedience "unto death" he received the inheritance, including "the heathen" and "the uttermost parts of the earth,"* with authority to manage the whole estate. This

* Ps. ii. 8.

authority he employed in sending forth missionaries to disciple all nations and to bring to him the unnumbered millions promised for his seed.

My first argument then is founded on the authority of Christ. The injunction in the text was not addressed to the eleven exclusively, but to them as depositaries of the divine commands, and through them to the whole body of ministers in every age. This appears from the promise subjoined, "Lo I am with you alway *even unto the end of the world.*" Indeed the eleven were expressly commanded to transmit to their successors all the injunctions which they themselves received, one of which was to disciple all nations. "Go ye—and *disciple all nations*,—teaching them to observe *all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*" This command then is now sounding in the ears of the ministers and churches of the nineteenth century.

And yet some when called upon for their aid are heard to say, I do not approve of such things: just as though they had a right to place themselves on the seat of judgment and decide for themselves what they will approve and what not, when the command of God is in their ear and his sword at their breast. Hark! did you not hear that thunder? "Curse ye Meroz;—curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."*

My second argument is grounded on the example of Christ and his apostles. The Saviour of the world sent out a band of missionaries and charged them to "preach the Gospel to every creature;" "and they went forth and preached every where" "that men should repent." No one objection can be raised against missions at the present day which will not equally lie against Christ and his apostles. The attempt is no more presumptuous now than then; the prospect is no more discouraging; the difficulties are no greater; the power that is engaged to give success is the same, for the promise remains unchanged, "Lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world."

My third argument is founded on what we owe to the heathen. Is the Gospel no blessing to you? And would it not be an equal bless-

* Judg. v. 23.

ing to them? And are we not bound to extend to others all the happiness in our power? To say that pagans can be as happy without the Gospel as with it, is to say that the Gospel is no blessing to men; and then you do not believe that it came from God. If the Gospel would be no blessing to the heathen, why do you preach or support it at home? Are you universalists? But still you find motives enough to preach or support what you call the Gospel at home. Why then not send it to other nations? If all mankind are to be saved, and mercy requires that the tidings be circulated with sectarian zeal through Christendom, to dispel the gloomy fears of former generations, why not send the glorious news to Asia? If things are so, let armies of missionaries be collected to stop those bloody rites which guilt and fear have invented to atone for sin and prevent future punishment. Let them hasten to stop the self-torturing pilgrimages, to take down the wretch who hangs voluntarily suspended by a hook thrust through his side, to drag the infatuated victim from under the car of Juggernaut and the widow from the funeral pile, and terminate for ever the destruction of infants in the Ganges. Let them pour upon the ravished ear of Asia the tidings that all guilt was expiated on Calvary; that they have no need of their bloody rites, nor even of a reformation of manners; that they may live in pleasure here without apprehension and enter on eternal pleasure hereafter.

Let it be true that all men will be saved, or even that men are as likely to be saved without the Gospel as with it, is the Gospel of no service in the present life, as a foundation of hope, as a purifier of manners, as a tamer of the passions, as a means of civilization, as a handmaid to science? What nation since the commencement of the Christian era ever arose from savage to civilized without Christianity? If you are the friends of the human family, I call upon you to weep over the degraded and comfortless condition of five hundred millions of people destitute of the light of science and the pleasures of refined society, subject, in a large proportion of cases, to all the hardships of the savage state, and in every instance to the horrours of a gloomy superstition.

But what believer in revelation except a universalist will say that men are as likely to be saved without the Gospel as with it? Be it so that *good* heathen will be saved, but the mass of the heathen are not good. They are sunk in the grossest vice. All the passions and all

the crimes that ever degraded man, there rage with little restraint. Owing to some defect which nothing but revelation can explain, man is universally inclined to evil. This truth, which every page of history attests, which a thousand poets have mournfully sung, which all the statutes of legislators have acknowledged, is confirmed by every day's experience. It is equally certain to every believer in Christianity that the grand means to reform the world is the Gospel of Christ. Let nations with all these native passions, run wild without this means of reformation, and what can you expect but that they will sink into the lowest depths of vice? Tell me not that their ignorance excuses them. Whence then that resentment with which you contemplate savages breaking into a village at night, burning houses, murdering infants in their mothers' arms, dragging their prisoners to the slow tortures of the stake, and rioting on their groans? Does ignorance excuse all the infernal passions and crimes of the heathen world? They will not plead this themselves. If they are conscious of no fault in these things, whence their resentment against each other? When they take revenge, do they not give judgment that pagans may sin? Do they not this when they execute their laws on criminals? "their conscience —bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing—one another."* But if any doubt remains, read the Epistle to the Romans: contemplate the picture of the heathen world sketched in the first chapter, and the inference drawn in the third. And what said the charitable John? "We know that we are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness."† The only means to reclaim the world is the Gospel of Christ. What nation since the world began was ever reclaimed without the Scriptures? Talk as you will of the salvation of pious heathen: let it be admitted if you please that now and then a pagan becomes a good man; yet the mass of the heathen are grossly wicked, and will always remain so till reformed by the Gospel of Christ.

But I go further. Show me one instance in which God has ever saved or enlightened an adult without his word and ordinances. But his word and ordinances cannot travel to the heathen alone and there explain themselves. The living preacher must go with them. Even in the days of miracles you never hear of a Bible carried through the air to a distant land and there expounding itself, nor of a pagan taught

* Rom. ii. 15. † 1 John v. 19.

to read without a human teacher. In the highest reign of miracles and inspiration, prophets and apostles must carry to men the word and ordinances of God, or no salvation was accomplished. You may take your opinions from yourself if you will; I will take mine from the word of God. And what does that teach? "The Scripture saith, —Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?"* If this does not absolutely prove that no adult heathen can be saved, it proves at least that no salvation can come to him in the known and ordinary way. Every imagination then that the heathen will come in of themselves if let alone, is a bewildering fancy.

My fourth argument is drawn from the sacrifices of the missionaries themselves and the debt of gratitude which we owe them. To see these interesting youth, with the spirit of martyrs, offering themselves to die under an Indian or an African sun; for the love of Christ tearing themselves from parents and brothers and sisters, to see them no more; taking an eternal leave of the scenes and companions of their youth; abandoning their native shore and their native tongue, to bear the tidings of a precious Saviour to distant nations; to see delicate young females, who have been dandled in the lap of parental tenderness, with a heroism which nothing but Christian principles could support, tearing themselves for the last time from the arms of trembling mothers and speechless sisters, to encounter the dangers of the seas and the still greater dangers of a torrid clime, in order to support their husbands by their smiles and prayers in a foreign land, among sooty pagans; this is a scene which makes selfishness blush and hang its head; which shames all the ordinary piety that is couched in ease at home trembling at self-denials. I beseech you to follow these precious youth with your prayers and your tenderest concern. They have gone in the service of our Father's family. They sacrifice all for us. Shall we not follow them with the interest of brothers and sisters through the groves of India and the forests of America? and when we hear of their trials, their dangers, their escapes, their successes, shall we not feel as though we were receiving accounts from our near kindred? When they tell us of the triumphs of Hindoo converts, or send to our

* Rom. x. 11—15.

ears the young hosannas of Syrian or Sandwich children, shall we not mingle our souls with theirs and join in the joy as though they were bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh? Yes, dear missionaries, we will remember you and all the sacrifices you have made till these hearts shall cease to beat. God Almighty go with you and keep you in the hollow of his hand till we meet you in heaven.

Sometimes, in restrained and modest terms, these beloved men hint to us their wants. I fear they do not tell all. I fear they may yet suffer in a foreign land for want of a little more of that wealth which is heaped up in America. Much has indeed been given; and I thank you and the American churches in the name of all the poor pagans of the wilderness. I thank you in the name of those blessed men who have forsaken all for Christ. When they lay their heads down far from mother and sister, your charity will spread their couch and cover them from the cold; your charity will furnish their table and refresh them when they are weary. I wish I could present to your view a thousand pagan children clothed in the garments which you have furnished, and learning to utter the praises of God out of the books which you have given. But many of you, I trust, will have greater joy at last. You will see them clad in brighter robes; you will see them touch the golden harp, and hear them say, But for your instrumentality we had not come to this. Then, I know, your reward will be full.

I can only say, if you have any thing more to spare we shall gladly receive it. And what you give will cheer the interesting wanderer on the plains of Ceylon and the shores of Owhyhee, who have left all for Christ, and whose sacrifices and prayers I hope will prove the salvation of our children.

My fifth argument is, that foreign missions are likely to prove the most glorious means of grace to us at home. While you are feeling for pagan souls and sending your sons to them, I firmly believe that your prayers and bounty will return into your own bosom. Such confidence I have in God, for I have heard him say, "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." I believe that while you are anxious to raise heathen nations from death, you will be enabled to shake off your grave clothes yourselves; that while you are seeking to draw forth Indian children from their sepulchres and present them alive to their rejoicing parents, your own children will start into life by your side; that while

the love of distant nations glows in our hearts, it will melt us all down into love to each other, and burn up all our jealousies and strifes. Some of these effects I seem already to discern. God grant that they may increase, until the joy of America shall respond to that of Asia, and in one burst of praise rise united to heaven. May your charities return into your own bosom and that of your children for days and years and an eternity to come.

My sixth argument is, that all the wealth of the world was given to Christ as a recompense for redeeming our souls: and shall the ingratitude of man withhold from him his hire? It will not always be thus. The time will come when "*Holiness to the Lord*" shall be written on all the possessions of men, on the very "bells of the horses;" and when "the pots in the Lord's house," (those used for culinary purposes in the families of the priests,) shall, in point of holiness, be "like the bowls before the altar," which received the blood of the victims until it was sprinkled; and when "every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts."* The common vessels used to dress our food, instead of being regarded as instruments of luxury or display, like our Bibles and psalm-books, shall be all for God. Men will write *Holiness to the Lord on every dollar and on every foot of ground. They will no longer labour to hoard but to do good.*

That will be such a generation as has not yet appeared. A few scattered individuals have approached towards this character, but the mass of mankind in every age have held their property as their own, and not as a sacred deposite. With multitudes the thought of giving to God never entered their minds. Go to them for their proportion to support the Gospel at home, and they will turn you away or deal out a paltry pittance that makes you ashamed. Go to them in behalf of the heathen, and they have nothing to spare. Though their poorer neighbours are giving by handfuls, they have nothing to spare. They are so in debt for new lands and tenements, that they cannot give a cent to save a world from death. It is not more evident that Lucifer himself has a separate interest from Christ than that these men have. Wrapt up in themselves, they mean that the universe shall take care of itself. It is not for them to go abroad to inquire how it fares with other na-

* Zech. xiv. 20, 21.

tions; their business is at home. In their own little sordid selves they lie buried, and not a meaner object is to be seen in the universe of God.

There is another class, including by far the greater part of the better sort, who are willing to give to Christ something like one or two per cent of their income, but hold the rest with an unyielding grasp. It will be otherwise in that coming day. I say not what they will give, for God has not fixed the limit for obvious reasons. In the first place, the wants of men in different countries and ages call for different degrees of charity. In the second place, had God prescribed the exact amount, the contribution would have been no more an index of the heart than the payment of any other tax. As by this part of human conduct he specially intended to draw forth the dispositions of men, he left the proportion to be fixed by themselves, after giving them some general intimations of his will. The only intimations of the kind were contained in the Hebrew law; and even there he left much *to the spontaneous* motion of the heart. Enough, however, was *fixed to serve as* a general guide to the conscience. In the first place, they were to devote the first fruits of their fields and of their flocks: in the second place, they were to give to the Levites a tenth of all the products of both: in the third place, they were to consume another tenth in charity feasts with the Levites and the poor: in the fourth place, they were to offer many expensive sacrifices, some fixed by law, and others voluntary. These four items cannot be reckoned at less than three tenths of their income. In the fifth place, the many contributions demanded for the poor, (some fixed by law and others voluntary,) together with all that was required for hospitality, are moderately estimated at another tenth. Indeed under the pressure of all these laws, a conscientious and liberal Hebrew would hardly get through the year without parting with one half of his income. This page God wrote and hung out of heaven and retired, leaving men to follow their own judgment and inclination to the end of the world. In the day when *Holiness to the Lord* shall be written on all the possessions of men, this page will be read and better understood. Then a law which has slept through so many selfish ages will be revived again, and holy men will feel it a privilege to give something like four tenths or one half of their income to God. And then they will look back on the contracted ages gone by, with much the same surprise as that with which we review the slave trade or the superstitions of the tenth century.

And all these increased contributions will be wanted. A little calculation would surprise you here. The single work of furnishing the people of the United States with Bibles for a century to come, almost exceeds belief. If we increase in numbers as we have done, before this century runs out more than six millions of Bibles must be annually issued to supply our own population. To raise up ministers too for the unnumbered thousands that will inhabit these states, will require perhaps a still greater tax. And among other cares poor forsaken Africa must not be neglected. Her crime of having a sable skin must not exclude her from the kingdom of heaven. Great will be the expense of training up her sons to serve at her altars: and this charge must fall chiefly on America. Here, as in no other civilized nation on earth, materials may be selected from a million and a half of her race. Nor are Bibles and ministers all. Expensive missions, for a great many years to come, must be supported in every part of the pagan and Mahometan world. And this expense must chiefly fall on Christians at home. Missionaries cannot be fed by ravens, nor will the heathen themselves support them. All the disposable wealth of Christendom will be put in requisition. Those hundreds of thousands which are now rusting in the coffers of the rich must be brought forth. Those mighty sums which support wars and theatres must be consecrated to God. No longer must wealth enough sleep in a single commercial city to convert a nation. No longer must any Ananias and Sapphira keep back a part of what they have professedly devoted to the Lord. Let all professors of religion hear this.

Already this reviving spirit of liberality has begun to appear. Princely fortunes have been given by some; thousands and tens of thousands by others. The poor labourer has divided with God his hard earned gains. Women have given up their ornaments. Children have thrust forward their little hands to drop their all into the missionary box. The world are fast waking up to the conviction that the silver and the gold are the Lord's.

My seventh argument is, that these exertions are necessary to bring to Christ the seed and the kingdom, the victory and the triumph, promised him as his reward. This world belongs to Christ. No other being has a right to erect an interest on this ground. And yet, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, two thirds of the earth remain in pagan

or Mahometan darkness. Ought so great a part of a world, which Christ has redeemed and owns, to continue in the hands of his enemy? If the suffrages of nations were to be collected, what would a redeemed race say? To whom would they assign a world given to Christ for redeeming them? Would they resign it to his enemy, who has despoiled it of its Eden, and covered it with briers and thorns, and turned it into a great charnel-house? or would they give it to him who came to rescue it from the hands of destroying devils, and died to save their souls? What is the vote of a redeemed race on this subject? *If human* instrumentality is wanted to drive the usurper from his seat, shall not a whole race rise up to the effort. Christ could have conquered his enemy without instruments; but he chose to bring in the nations in a way suited to moral agents, by instructions, so conveyed as to favour calm reflection, that is, through human organs; and he chose to employ men as co-workers with him, that he might train them to benevolent action. He is not dependent on us for his happiness. It is the height of benevolence that he is willing to consider the *rescued nations* as his reward. It is like one who, in the division of spoils, selects a captive for his portion, and makes the release of that unhappy one the gain most welcome to his heart. And vast indeed must be the good that can satisfy the benevolence of the Son of God, and be an adequate reward for his wonderful obedience "unto death." Let him have the infinite joy. And if human instrumentality is wanted, let the whole mass of Christendom rise up to the work. Is there a wretch so withered and debased that he will not do all in his power to push things forward to this glorious issue?

The Redeemer began his triumph when he ascended from Olivet. At the moment of parting from his disciples, he was surrounded with no outward lustre. Perhaps the bright cloud, which received him, contained the habiliments of glory, with which he was ever afterwards to be arrayed. Decked thus in his regal robes, he began his triumphant march; returning in state like a glorious conqueror to his royal city. I see him attended with "thousands of angels" and "twenty thousand" "chariots of God," leading "captivity captive,"* with death and hell chained to his chariot wheels. I hear them shout, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord

* Ps. lxviii. 17, 18.

strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. [The Lord who has returned with glorious scars, a Conqueror from his wars.] Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in."*

Early too he commenced his triumph on earth. In the wonderful campaign he went forth single handed against two worlds. He girded his sword upon his thigh, and marched directly into the heart of Satan's kingdom. Wherever he went he conquered. At his approach temples and altars fell; oracles grew dumb; the Roman empire, the chief seat of Satan's visible kingdom, shook to its centre, and afterwards opened to the Conqueror, and fell prostrate at his feet. He marched through the nations, breaking down the prisons which Satan had reared to confine his wretched captives. Millions, who had been immured in dungeons from their birth, were brought forth to the joyous light. Wherever he came, freedom and joy spring up around him. His trophies were not wasted provinces, but souls delivered from the destroyer. The high-minded spirit of chivalry celebrated the feats of disinterested knights, who roamed the kingdoms, as imagination feigned, to deliver oppressed females from enchanted castles, or from the grasp of giants and genii: but how much more benignant a deliverer is here; marching through the nations, and rescuing those who had no helper, from the tyranny of Satan. God speed thee, thou glorious Conqueror. Go on and prosper: and may the blessing of millions ready to perish, come upon thee. We will follow the wheels of his triumphal chariot, and shout as we go, "Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest."

His triumphant kingdom commenced among the Jews at Pentecost, and among the Gentiles at the baptism of Cornelius. From that time it spread like lightning through all the countries from Spain to India, and from Scythia to Ethiopia, until in three centuries it mounted the throne of the Cesars. But after it had breasted an embattled race for three hundred years, and had placed its foot on the neck of a subjugated world, it fell by luxury and pride,—by an assumption of lordly dominion, and by ingrafting upon the simple institutions of Christ the pomp and pageantry of pagan rituals; until in punishment one half of the dominions which had been rescued from the prince of darkness was

* Ps. xxiv. 7—10.

given back into the hands of Mahometans, and the rest sunk under the tyranny and mummeries of Rome, until it lay conquered and besotted at the feet of the man of sin.

But this and every other enemy shall be destroyed. To complete the triumph of the Redeemer on earth, Satan must not only be again expelled from the Roman empire, but be bound "a thousand years," that he "deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years—be fulfilled."

And when all his elect are brought home and displayed in one happy family around the throne, with what infinite joy will he bend over his redeemed Church, and contemplate their blessedness, and hear their praise. And what glory and honour and blessing will their bursting hearts for ever ascribe to him. John had a vision of this scene and makes the following report. "After this I beheld and lo a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders and the four living creatures, and fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God, saying, Amen: blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."* At another time he saw a grand jubilee held in heaven in honour of the Lamb; the redeemed first beginning the song, the angels then striking in, and before it was done the whole creation employed in the bursting praise. "And when he had taken the book the four living creatures and four and twenty elders [the representatives of the whole Church] fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and [about] the living creatures and the elders; (and the number of them was ten

* Rev. vii. 9—12.

thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands,) saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing. And every creature which in is heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen; and the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."*

How delightful to contemplate the honours which encircle the Lamb in the midst of his Father's throne. After wandering an exile from heaven for more than thirty years for our revolt, how joyous to know that he has found a home. After the crown of thorns, we are happy to see him wear the diadem of the universe. After depending for bread on the charity of his female followers, we are glad to see him the Heir of all things and able in his turn to impart to others. After being so long neglected and despised by men, we rejoice that he has found those who know how to honour his worth; we exult to hear the shout of all heaven in his praise. After the agonies of the garden and the cross, we sing and shout for joy that he has found infinite and eternal delight in the glory of his Father and the salvation of his Church. Let him have his happiness and his honours. Amidst all the sufferings of life it shall be our solace that the despised Nazarene has found his throne, —that the man of sorrows is happy at last. Of all the luxuries that ever feasted the human soul, the sweetest is to see the Lamb that was slain in the midst of his Father's throne. We will embalm his name in our grateful hearts. We will embalm it by our praise, which shall live while we have breath and sink away upon our dying lips. And we will embalm it among the songs of the upper world. If we are permitted to come and stand where the elders bow, how will we bow and sing. When we shall look down to hell and see our old companions there, and then back to Calvary, and then look up and read the touching traces of love in those melting eyes and among the prints of the nails and the thorns, we *will* embalm his name if love and songs can do it. We will tell all heaven of his love. If ever new inhabitants should come in from other worlds, they shall hear the story of Calvary. If commis-

* Rev. v. 8—14.

sioned in remote ages of eternity to visit other systems, we will carry the amazing tidings to them. We will tell them to all we meet. We will erect monuments of the wonderful facts on every plain of heaven, and inscribe them all over with the story of the manger, the garden, and the cross. While gratitude and truth remain, the name and the love of Jesus shall never be forgotten.

And now, my beloved brethren, I invite you to go with me and look for a moment over the interesting scene which is opening on earth. For many years the Christian world had been sunk in a profound slumber in regard to this duty; but for the last four and thirty years they have been waking up. He who has engraven Zion on the palms of his hands,—who never wants means to fulfil his promises,—has sent his heavenly influence to rouse the Christian world. He beheld the desolations of Zion and has come to rebuild her ruined walls. He heard the groans of his people as with harps on the willows they were weeping "by the rivers of Babylon," and has come to bring them again "to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." Eternal thanks to God for what our eyes have seen and our ears have heard for the last four and thirty years. Eternal thanks to God for the increasing wonders which are rapidly opening on the world. And O can we restrain the bursting emotion? for ever blessed be his great and glorious name for what we have begun to see in our own land. It is more than thirty years since the Christians in Great Britain awoke; and they have been holding on their way with increasing majesty and glory, until that little island bestows annually more than a million of dollars upon strangers. It is fourteen years since New England broke her slumbers, and now the mass of her population seems drenched in the missionary spirit. I saw the day cover the plains of Europe. I saw the westward-travelling light spread itself over these eastern states. Nine years ago I saw the rays of the morning tip our Presbyterian horizon. I saw the dawn blush deeper and deeper. I knew it would not all return again to midnight. I knew the sun would rise. At length I saw his golden limb above the eastern woods; and from the course of day I knew that soon the heavenly flood would cover all the plains to Arkansas and the Pacific. Already the influence of heaven has dropt upon the wilderness and the yell of the war whoop is changed to notes of praise. We must not stop till every Indian tongue has joined the general song. We must not stop till our influence has cheered the whole extent of South America. And then we must go forth to the islands, and hold on our way

till we meet our brethren in other fields and unite with them in completing the harvest of the world.

We owe the sincerest gratitude to God for giving us our existence in such a day as this. Many prophets and kings desired to see this day and saw it not. One spirit has seized the Christian world to send the Gospel, with a great company of its publishers, to all the nations of the earth. Missionary and Bible societies, those stupendous monuments of Christian charity, have risen so rapidly and in so great numbers throughout Europe and America, that in contemplating them, we are "like them that dream." These societies have already accomplished wonders, and are constantly stretching forward to future achievements beyond the reach of imagination. On the burning sands of Africa, where Christian feet never before trod, there is the holy band of missionaries, struggling, amidst dangers and deaths, to lead the sable tribes of Ethiopia to stretch forth their hands to God. On the plains of Hindostan, a "consecrated host" are translating the Scriptures into more than thirty different languages, spoken by a population greater than that of all Europe. On the borders of China they have produced a version which will give the oracles of God to one quarter of the population of the globe. In the southern islands a nation is born in a day. From the hill of Zion,—from the top of Calvary,—they are freighting every caravan of pilgrims with Bibles for all the countries of the east. Certainly the angel has begun his flight through the midst of heaven, "having the everlasting Gospel to preach—to every nation and kindred and tongue and people."*

My soul is enlarged and stands erect as I look down the declivity of years and see the changes which these young Davids, under God, will make in all the earth. Countless millions are shortly to awake from the sleep and darkness of a hundred ages to hail the day that will never go down. I see the darkness rolling upon itself and passing away from a thousand lands. I see a cloudless day following and laying itself over all the earth. I see the nations coming up from the neighbourhood of the brutes to the dignity of the sons of God,—from the stye in which they had wallowed, to the purity of the divine image. I see the meekness of the Gospel assuaging their ferocious passions, melting down a

* Rev. xiv. 6.

million contending units into one, silencing the clangour of arms, and swelling into life a thousand budding charities which had died under the long winter. I hear the voice of their joy. It swells from the vallies and echoes from the hills. I already hear on the eastern breeze the songs of new-born nations. I already catch from the western gale the praise of a thousand islands. I ascend the Alps and see the darkness retiring from the papal world. I ascend the Andes and see South America and all the islands of the Pacific one altar. I ascend the mountains of Thibet, and hear from the plains of China and from every jungle and pagoda of Hindostan the praises of the living God. I see all Asia bowing before him who eighteen centuries ago hung in the midst of them on Calvary. I traverse oceans and hear from every floating Bethel the songs of the redeemed.

> "The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
> Shout to each other; and the mountain tops,
> From distant mountains, catch the flying joy;
> Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
> Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round."

Come that blessed day. Let my eyes once behold the sight, and then give this worthless body to the worms.

THE

NATIONAL PREACHER.

Go....Teach all Nations....*Mat.* xxviii, 19.

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SERMON V.*

BY GARDINER SPRING, D. D.

NEW-YORK.

INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF REVELATION.

PSALMS, CXXX. 2.—*Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*

IT is no uncommon thing for men in Christian lands to profess a belief in divine revelation merely from habit and example. Men who from their infancy have been instructed in the principles and duties of Christianity, never sink to the degradation of Paganism, and it is hard for them to descend to the reproaches of infidelity; though their religion may be only hereditary, and their belief in revelation fortified more by the traditions of their fathers, than by any rational and sound conviction. Far be it from me to intimate that this prepossession exerts no benignant influence, or that it is not an influence of the most enviable kind. But this is not the reception which the Bible demands. The credentials of its high-born origin are of such unquestionable force and authority, that it solemnly and fearlessly invites a judgment which is the result of thorough investigation. Such an investigation is demanded, as the only course of safety to the sinner, of strong consolation to the Christian, and of due respect to the Great Author of revelation.

In examining the question, Whether the Bible is the word of God, we should expect to find in the *Book itself* decisive marks of its divine origin. Nor is this expectation defeated. God has magnified his *word* above all his name. There are no such illustrations of the Deity

* It is but justice to the Author of this Sermon to say, that it is one of a Series of Discourses prepared, on the Genuineness, Authenticity, and Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.—*Editor.*

as are found in his word. Do the heavens and the earth declare the glory of God? Do the works of creation and the administration of providence disclose his divine nature, develope his love and wisdom and power, and all his essential greatness and goodness? and do they bear the impress of his hand? Much more do we see the hand and character of God in the Bible, and read his name, written as with sunbeams, on every page of this holy book.

Were there no other evidence, one would think that the attentive perusal of the sacred pages would be enough to convince any impartial mind, that they are not of human invention. I say, an attentive perusal of the sacred pages; for no man ought to consider himself qualified to sit in judgment on the internal evidences of divine inspiration, who is not familiar with the Sacred Volume: And the more familiar he is, the more competent is he to scrutinize and weigh the testimony. The Abbé Winklemann, perhaps the most classical writer upon the fine arts, after descanting with great zeal and eloquence upon the perfection of the art of sculpture, as exhibited in the *Apollo Belvidere*, observes, with great enthusiasm, in recommending it to the admiration of those who would become eminent artists—Go and study it; and if you see no peculiar beauty in it to captivate you, go again; and if still you discern nothing, go again, and again, and again, until you *feel it*; for be assured it is there. To every lover of moral science we would say of the Bible, If he does not see the evidence of its divinity at the first glance, let him look again; and if he does not see it at the second or third perusal, let him look again; and if he fails to see it even then, let him still examine,—for he may be most confidently assured, that the evidence is there to be found.

It is this *internal evidence*, to which we would direct your attention in the present discourse. And we remark,

I. From a careful inspection of the Bible, we find that THIS BOOK ALONE ANSWERS ALL THE PURPOSES OF A SUPERNATURAL REVELATION.

When we advert to the different systems of religion, which either have obtained, or now obtain, we see they are radically defective, and fail of their object. The systems of natural religion are to a great extent unintelligible, and therefore never have reached the exigencies of the mass of mankind. They are all confused, uncertain, and contradictory; and have never been satisfactorily understood, even by the most reflecting men. On many, and most important points of faith, and duty, and salvation, they furnish no instruction whatever. Every system of human philosophy, or of ancient or modern Paganism, has been complained of by its own votaries; and its best instructed disci-

ples have seen and felt its utter insufficiency to the great purposes of a satisfactory religion.

The religion of the Bible, the more it is examined, will be found adapted to all the purposes for which a revelation could be given. The intellectual, moral, and physical constitution of men, in all the varieties of human ignorance, pollution, want, and misery; in all that is interesting in their hopes, or fearful in their apprehensions,—whether they respect a present or future state of being,—is so kindly and fully consulted by the principles of this revelation, that it must be seen and acknowledged to be without a defect. The Bible instructs men in all they need to know. It proclaims the character of that Infinite Being with whom men have to do: It informs us how this world came into existence, and how, and for what end it is governed: It reveals whatever is necessary for the glory of the Creator, and the happiness of the creature, and discloses the perfect harmony between the honour of the Great Supreme, and the best good of his subjects. It discovers the sinfulness and condemnation of men, and the method of their recovery: It reveals promises that are worthy of God, and threatenings that are required by the character and condition of men: It proclaims pardon, peace, and eternal life to the holy; and disaster, ruin, and death to the unholy: It reveals the object and end of whatever appears unseemly and untoward in creation and providence; and proclaims the design which the Mighty Governor of the world aims at in the whole series of events and revolutions which have taken place from the beginning, or will take place to the end of time: And it brings to our view the close of this earthly system, the day of final account, and the New Earth and New Heavens that shall never pass away. On all these topics, so infinitely interesting to men,—its instructions are clear, full, certain, authoritative. And all this is what a revelation must disclose, to answer the great purposes of religion for a race of fallen beings.

Where is the revelation that makes these disclosures except in the Bible? What other religion informs the world, or pretends to inform it on subjects of such high moment? From what other source can the mind of man receive satisfaction on every point of duty and of hope? Where shall we look for a system of instruction that meets every exigency, and answers all the purposes of a religion, except to the Holy Scriptures? If then it is reasonable to expect a revelation that is intelligible and full—that in all its essential principles is equally adapted to the wise and the unwise—that answers all the purposes for which we can conceive a revelation should be given; and if this revelation is,

III. Another argument in favour of the inspiration of the Scriptures may be deduced from THEIR PERFECT HARMONY.

There is a perfect harmony in all the varied contents of this book. There is perfect harmony in its history, in its doctrines, and in its duties. Every writer agrees with himself, and all agree with one another and with facts.

The Scriptures were composed, not in a single age, but in the progress of sixteen hundred years; a period during which the views and opinions of men were in a state of great fluctuation, and yet the views and opinions here introduced are ever the same.

They were not written by one man, but by a great variety of men,—men in different classes of human society, men imbued with different prejudices, men of science, and unlettered men; and yet perfect harmony and consistency pervade all their writings.

They all wrote upon subjects also, upon which men are peculiarly prone to disagree,—the subjects of religion. No writings could have been more liable to inconsistencies; and yet no one of them controverts the statements or opinions of another.

Most of the writers were entirely unacquainted with each other, and entirely unknown to each other; and yet in sentiment, in design, in every thing essential to harmony, there are the same facts, the same principles, the same grand object. If the writers of the sacred books then were not under the divine direction, whence this unexampled harmony?

Infidels we know have denied that this harmony exists. But the unfounded charge has been abundantly refuted by the critical investigation and faithful research of the abettors of divine inspiration. If we consider the different sources from which the inspired writers drew their narratives; the different designs which they had in the composition of them; the facility with which names and numbers are altered by imperfect readings; the omission of some events by one writer and the insertion of them by another; the different methods of computing time, which on close examination will be found to be perfectly consistent; the ambiguity of particular passages of which more ample illustration is to be found elsewhere; the use of the same word or term in different senses in different paragraphs;—we shall find that the detached passages on which infidels have laid so much stress, afford no ground for impugning the consistency of the Sacred Writers. The alleged contradictions, though at first glance apparent, are found on examination not real. Nor is there a single instance that does not admit

of a rational solution. It would indeed require patience to illustrate passages seemingly at variance. The late Bishop Horne remarks, "Many and painful are the researches, usually necessary to be made for settling points of this kind. Pertness and ignorance may ask a question in three lines, which it will cost learning and ingenuity thirty pages to answer. When this is done, the same question shall be triumphantly asked again the next year, as if nothing had ever been written upon the subject. And as people in general, for one reason or other, like short objections better than long answers, in this mode of disputation, the odds must ever be against us; and we must be content with those for our friends, who have honesty and erudition, candour and patience, to study both sides of the question."

After all that has been written on this subject, we are justified in saying, that the harmony of the inspired writings is inexplicable upon any other supposition than that they are of divine original. You find the penmen of the Sacred Volume, whatever be their subject, all expressing the same thing. When they speak of God; when they speak of man; when they speak of holiness and sin, of redemption by Christ Jesus, and of the operations of the Holy Spirit, of heaven and of hell; there is no discrepancy,—but one grand design, one undivided scheme of truth, and duty, and retribution runs through the whole. However the sacred writers may vary in the manner and extent of their illustrations, they are all perfectly congruous. It is impossible this harmony could have been the result of any preconcerted plan; and if they did not speak under the influence of the same Spirit, how is this harmony to be accounted for? In the writings of what two uninspired men do you discover such wonderful consistency upon so nice and interesting a subject. You see the various schemes of human philosophy, the boasted treatises of natural religion, are one thing to-day, and another thing to-morrow. They vary with the wisdom, or the folly, or caprice of their authors, and change with every passing century and every revolution of public manners. But the Bible is ever the same. Not one principle of it is at war with another. The light which beams from its pages may have different shades and degrees of brightness, but it emanates from the same glorious Fountain; and wherever its rays are condensed and combined, they present the image of Him, who is himself Light, and in whom is no darkness at all. But, we observe in the next place,

IV. The Bible is the most inexhausted, exhaustless Book.

There is no book in any language, or in any country, or in any age, that in this respect can be compared with the Bible. It is what its name denotes it to be, The Book *of all books*. The Bible is

more inexhaustible than all other books, in as much as the uncreated intelligence is more inexhaustible than the intelligence of creatures. The extent, number, variety, and importance of the subjects which it treats; the weight and pertinence of its instructions, and the illimitable extent of views it opens to the mind, give it a pre-eminence in an intellectual view, unutterably beyond all other books that ever were written. It is truly a book of wonders. There is a fulness in these sacred pages, which is like the rising and full-orbed sun. The more you gaze at its unclouded splendour, and the more its emanating effulgence is diffused, the more do its resources appear unwasted and unwasting.

The Scriptures have taught all that men know concerning morals and religion. There is no article of faith, and no moral duty, known by men, which is capable of being clearly illustrated and satisfactorily proved, which is not either expressly declared, or fairly and unquestionably implied in the Scriptures. The Bible has enervated and exhausted many a vigorous and capacious mind; but there is no mind so vigorous and capacious as to have exhausted the Bible. There are men who have read and studied this volume most thoroughly and intensely, and who, the more they have read and studied it, have the more been charmed with its clearness and simplicity,—who, at the same time, have been, at every step of their progress, more and more deeply convinced that it is a fathomless profound of light and knowledge. There are men who have made the Scriptures the object of their investigation for half a century, and who have examined every chapter and every paragraph, fifty or an hundred times; and who, with every fresh perusal, have discovered new thought and new causes for admiration and joy. The Bible has been read and studied, in all ages of the world, a thousand fold more than any other book. It has occupied the time and thought of men of the profoundest intellect, and of the most unwearied and patient research. What years and ages have passed away in the study of the Scriptures! What a multitude of individuals have been occupied in this elevated investigation! Reflect on the number now existing in different countries, faithfully devoting their time and talents to the study of the Bible; survey the immense libraries that have been written in defence and illustration of its truths; and though in every effort you shall see some new light elicited, you shall stand amazed to hear all confess that so much remains unknown. The more deeply men have been absorbed in their contemplations upon the Bible, the more thorough has been their conviction of its illimitable resources. And it has been a conviction which uniformly grew with their acquaintance with the Scriptures;—which has never been diminished even by all the honesty, and prayer, and humility which they have brought to the research.

Now we maintain this is one of the grand peculiarities of the Bible. It is literally exhaustless: which cannot be affirmed of any other book. There is no book, except this, which a few careful readings of a sound and retentive mind will not exhaust. And whence this peculiarity which may be claimed for the Bible? It is not voluminous; though on the subjects which it professes to treat, it contains more than all other volumes combined. Whence is it that this little book should be literally so exhaustless? There is but one answer to this question. It is the production of the Infinite Mind. The Mighty Intelligence of the Only Wise God employed its energies in composing the Bible, and has condensed in this little volume facts, thoughts, principles, and counsels, which will remain a source of instruction till the heavens shall pass away, and still be inexhausted and inexhaustible. We add,

V. The inspiration of the Scriptures may also be conclusively argued from the ELEVATION AND GRANDEUR OF THEIR DESIGN.

The Bible, as a composition, exhibits a unity and greatness of contrivance and plot, if I may so speak, altogether above the reach of human invention. Let a man sit down to the perusal of this book from beginning to end, as he would sit down to the perusal of a tragedy or epic poem, and he will discover the traces of a plan, which, in its commencement, its progress, its filling up, its close and catastrophe, lies far beyond the most inventive genius that was ever created. If the Bible be a human production, then with respect to its general device and contrivance, it is a most wonderful production, and such as never has been and never can be equalled. No unprejudiced man can take a comprehensive view of this Book, without being convinced that it presents a view of truths, and a system of operations, and a motive and end of its constitution, which could have been devised only by the All-Wise God. The Bible presents a plan which none but God *knew*, and which therefore none but God could *reveal*.

The Bible carries you back into the ages of eternity, where its wonderful plan was originally devised. It tells you of a method, a scheme of operations which was laid out by the Eternal Deity, when there were no depths and no fountains of water, and before ever the earth was. The first visible expression of this mighty design was made in the creation of the world; and the earth we inhabit, was constituted the beautiful theatre on which this wonderful drama was to be exhibited. The Actors in this drama are the three glorious Persons in the Ever-blessed Godhead, angels, and men;—the inanimate creation, with all its richness, grandeur, and beauty, having been made and continued only in subservience to these, and destined to pass away and be forgotten at the consummation of this extended design. The spectators of this great

drama are all intelligent beings. They constitute "the eye of the Universe;" and while each in his proper place has a part to act, he is the immediate witness of the whole transaction. The time occupied by this sublime and momentous exhibition, extends from the primeval creation, down to a period yet far distant and unknown, when time shall be lost in eternity, and these heavens and this earth shall flee away, and no place shall be found for them. The interest involved *in this* transaction is the interest of every mind in the universe; for on the part he acts, is suspended the painful or blissful immortality of every individual in all worlds. In the early and progressive developement of this design, the Scriptures inform us, that a part of the angels kept not their first estate, and that through their instrumentality, the first parents of the human race fell, and introduced sin and misery into this world from generation to generation. On this apostacy they reveal a promised Mediator, who was to be the seed of the woman, and to the introduction of whom, in the fulness of time, all the dispensations of a general and particular providence bore a visible relation, and maintained a uniform tendency. They speak of a universal *deluge*—of the division of the earth among the descendants of its survivors—of the separation of a particular family and nation from the rest of this corrupted world, as the lineage of the predicted Deliverer;—they speak of the revolution and destruction of empires with a view to His advent, and the establishment and final glory of His kingdom. He is the Hero of the mighty drama, and when he appears, the Scriptures invest him with a character which the human mind would never have thought of. He is the child of an humble virgin, and yet the Mighty God; he is an infant in the manger, and yet the Everlasting Father; he is the reproach of men, and yet the adoration of angels; he is the crucified Saviour, the only Propitiation for sin, and yet the Lord of life, the Prince of the kings of the earth, the Head of a redeemed and sanctified kingdom, for whose sake he controls the kingdom of providence, sends down his Holy Spirit, and involves in his administration all the concerns of men. As the part he acts becomes more prominent, and his merciful designs are evolved, every thing gradually assumes a new aspect. The conflict between light and darkness, holiness and sin, truth and error, happiness and misery, between himself and the powers of darkness, becomes more vigorous, and less doubtful in its issue, till he triumphs over all his enemies, and his kingdom is established from the rising to the setting sun, and maintains its supremacy, its purity, its peace, its joy, till near the close of this earthly creation. This great mystery is to be perfected,—the wonders of this august scheme are to be fully unfolded at the Last Great Day. Then the Hero—the Great Re-

deemer, shall be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe: Then the ultimate end of the whole plan shall be brought out to the view of an admiring Universe, and it shall be seen that the glory of its Author and the happiness of all the holy, were the moving impulse of the entire design: Then will the Redeemer descend from heaven in clouds, surrounded by the glory of his Father, and attended by all his holy angels: The dead will be summoned from their graves, and innumerable nations gathered around the throne of Eternal Justice: Then the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal: Then will the visible heavens pass away with a great noise; the elements melt with fervent heat; and the earth be burnt up: Then the Son will deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, and God will be all in all.

This wonderful plan is revealed in the Bible. And was such a device, such a drama within the scope of human invention? Could such elevation and grandeur of design ever have entered into the head of man? O how Godlike! Kings and heroes, nations and empires, in their earthly relations, are here as the drop of the bucket. Patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs—the general assembly and church of the First Born—principalities and powers in heavenly places—the glorious Persons in the Godhead—earth, heaven, and hell;—these are the persons and objects which here pass in review. Here are presented the perfections of God in unexampled greatness, loveliness, and beauty. Here are unfolded the mysteries of providence and the wonders of redemption. Every thing is noble, every thing refined, every thing holy, every thing advancing toward an issue which will ascribe "Salvation to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb for ever!" Well may angels desire to look into these things. Well may they watch the progress of this magnificent system with anxious scrutiny; for it is enough to enlarge the understanding and exalt the views of seraphim before the throne. We ask again, is such a plan the result of merely human invention? Is there not something here which must for ever have remained far beyond the grasp or discovery of mortals unenlightened from above? Would any child of Adam ever have thought of inventing such a plan? What human mind ever possessed so mighty a grasp, as to comprehend and originate this Godlike design? But this Godlike design is revealed to us by men, in most instances of no extraordinary talents; some of them plain shepherds, or humble, illiterate fishermen and carpenters; and yet they speak of these great subjects with the facility and dignity with which men of sound judgment speak of the common concerns of life. And how do you account for this mysterious fact? "What cause expanded the minds of these humble men over this unlimited field of

thought? Whence is it that they never fell beneath the grandeur of their subject—never wandered amidst its complications"—never sunk in its unfathomable depths? We leave these inquiries with the rejecters of revelation. To us it appears that no human mind ever invented this wonderful design,—that it bears on the face of it the intelligence and signature of Heaven,—and that the men who were selected to disclose it, spake not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth. There is a divine majesty in this plan and in the manner of disclosing it, an elevation of thought, a strength, and extent, and greatness of conception, which cast the proudest efforts of human genius into the shade, and which indicate a far higher Source.

To the preceding we will only add,

VI. The inspiration of the Scriptures abundantly appears from THEIR POWER AND EFFICACY.

It is impossible to exhibit the force of this argument within the compass of a few paragraphs, when volumes have not exhausted it. It is a species of evidence of great importance, particularly to the mind of an unlettered man, while it has equal influence with the learned. Many an unlearned Christian may not be able to give a *single* reason for his confidence in divine revelation, deduced from a course of logical argumentation; while he can say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the *power of God* unto salvation." He can tell you with emphasis, that he *knows* the Bible to be true, from the testimony of his *own heart*. "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." As he takes the Bible into his hands, he can declare that this book, under the influence of the divine Spirit, is able to separate his soul from sin; and that because the best feelings of his own soul are in such exact accordance with what the Bible reveals, he is *abundantly* satisfied it is the word of God. Others may hesitate and "go away;" but he will say, with Simon Peter, "Lord to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God." He has a knowledge of the truth of divine revelation which is peculiar to himself. He knows the Bible to be true by his own experience. He loves the truths it reveals, and sees the beauty, and feels the infinite importance of them as the food of his spirit, and the foundation of his eternal hopes. The weakest and most ignorant child of grace will tell you, "Whereas I was once blind, I now see." And if you hesitate and complain, he will reply, "Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes." Once I was dead in trespasses and sins; now I am alive unto God. With all my remaining imperfections, I trust I am a new creature. I have new objects of affection, new motives of conduct, new hopes, new fears, new joys, a new

character. I dwell as it were in a new world. I seem to have passed from death unto life, and to be under the influence of principles, which while they humble, exalt me; while they purify, make me supremely happy: and the only counterpart to what I find within my own bosom, is in that sure word of prophecy, which shone as a light in a dark place, till the day dawned and the day star arose in my heart.

To this we know the infidel may reply, All this is of no avail so long as it extends not beyond the bosom of the narrator, nor can it be considered in any other view than as the result of strong impulse and ardent enthusiasm. But what if we could show the infidel ten thousand instances of this sort,—and these not confined to the unlearned,—nay, ten thousand times ten thousand instances in which men of the soundest discretion, and of acknowledged integrity should furnish the same narration! Ought not the testimony to avail? and would it not avail with ingenuous minds? And if in addition to this, it should appear, that in each of these multiplied examples, the transformation within has been followed by an accordant transformation without, and that the moral influence of the Bible upon the visible character and conduct is as great as its moral influence upon the soul!—Would not this constitute evidence which even a disingenuous mind would find it hard to resist? And yet, this is the evidence which has been constantly accumulating, wherever the Bible has exerted its native energy. Witness the extensive propagation of Christianity and its correspondent results. Destitute of every adventitious advantage, supported by no secular power, and upheld by no worldly interest,—with no other recommendation than its intrinsic excellence, and no other patron than the God of heaven,—the gospel of Jesus Christ has triumphed over the opposition of men and devils,—visited every land and nation,—and in all its progress has multiplied its converts like the drops of morning dew. Its primitive promulgators and their successors have gone forth under the high sanction, "Thus saith the Lord,"—and nothing has been able to retard their career. They have marched onward in defiance of all the indifference of a world that lieth in wickedness, of all the arts of philosophy, and all the virulence of relentless persecution. Other religions have been devised by human wisdom, and propagated by the secular arm, and they have passed away, and left no memorial behind them, except the deleterious influence they have exerted on the human character; while the religion of the Bible has lived, and spread, and left its memorials in the moral purity and happiness of a great multitude which no man can number. There is not an individual of the human family, there is not a spot on the globe, where the Bible has been suffered to exert its influence, but it has produced a moral reformation. Paul informs us what the effect of the gospel was upon the early Christians, where, after hav-

ing enumerated "idolaters, effeminate, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners," he adds, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed; but ye are sanctified; but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Wherever the Bible has found access to the mind, it has been the light that has dispelled darkness; the voice that has disturbed the slumbers of sin; the sword which has pierced the soul; the hammer that has broken the flinty heart in pieces; the ethereal fire that has enkindled every gracious affection. Think of the myriads of each sex and every condition, rich and poor, bond and free, young and old, who have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son; cast your eye back through the long tract of preceding ages upon the multitudes, whose pagan ignorance and sottishness have been chased away; whose views have been rectified; whose passions have been restrained; whose consciences have been awakened; whose hearts have been sanctified; whose lives have been conformed to moral rectitude; and who have themselves been made meet for the coming inheritance; and you will have some just conceptions of the moral tendency of the Bible. Go and stand in the midst of some of those numberless scenes of wonder and of mercy, of sovereignty and omnipotence, which have thrown such a charm over these latter days and these ends of the earth, where the Spirit of Jesus has moved the assemblies of his people as the trees of the wood are moved by a mighty wind; where hundreds have trembled on the verge of eternal wo, and where after the storm was past, a "still, small voice" has whispered divine peace, and awoke their everlasting song; and you may appreciate the influence of the Bible. O! what an unbending heart must that be, that has witnessed one Revival of religion, and can still be in doubt, whether the Bible is the word of the all-powerful and all-gracious God!

And with these, there are effects still more extended, that are the legitimate and sole results of the Bible. The effects of the Bible on human society are such as no other cause has produced. It has mitigated the horrours of war; it has given effective obligation to the nuptial vow; it has elevated the character and condition of one half the human species who were unnaturally degraded because they were not men; it has thrown its guardianship around helpless infancy and rescued it from the floods and from the flames; it has interposed its benignity in behalf of the inferiour and dependent ranks of human society; it has constituted every Church of God, and every Christian community an asylum for the widow and the orphan and for the poor and the needy; it has softened the rigours of despotism and broken the yoke of the oppressed; it has diminished the number of sanguinary revolutions, and given mildness, permanency, and force to public law; it has proved the

unchanging friend of literature and the arts; it has in every view diminished the sources of human misery and multiplied the sources of human happiness. It has opened rivers in high places and fountains in the midst of vallies. It has made the wilderness a pool of water, and dry land springs of water. From a world of barrenness and death, where there were nothing but briars and thorns and beasts of prey, already has it made a world of fertility and life, where trees of righteousness spring up and bear unwithering fruits, and where the lion and the lamb lie down together, and where, at no distant period, there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain.

These effects of the Bible, also, are uniform. Wherever they are found, the Bible has preceded them; wherever they are not found, the Bible is either unknown, or has received no serious attention. Go where you will, where the Bible has exerted its proper influence, and you shall see its unvarying tendency, in the same holiness of heart and life, the same peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost, the same social and public welfare. And in view of this native power and efficacy of the Bible, we ask, can it be a cunningly devised fable? Does not its moral influence furnish distinct and decisive evidence of its divinity? Let the infidel produce a volume which has accomplished what the Bible has accomplished, and I will at once receive it as from God. And if from a view of what the Bible has done, we reflect for one moment, what would be its influence on the world, were its principles and its spirit universally adopted, the argument in its favour is overwhelming. If we look forward to what it will yet accomplish, when every mind shall be illumined by its revelations, every heart purified, every life renewed, every land redeemed from its corruptions and bondage, and the whole world assume a character which shall be the exact counterpart of this omnipotent revelation; how irresistible will be the evidence, that the Bible is in truth the word of the Living God. This wonderful Book resembles its wonderful Author. God has indeed magnified it above all his name. From what we know of God in the visible universe, we need only to be acquainted with the Bible to be satisfied that it emanates from him.

Thus we see, that the *fitness of the Bible to all the purposes of a divine revelation*—its *holiness and purity*—its *perfect harmony*—its *inexhaustible fulness*—its *elevation and grandeur of design*—its *power* and *efficacy*—all combine to demonstrate that it comes from God. And what God hath written shall remain for ever. The heavens and the earth may pass away, but "my word," saith Jehovah, "shall never pass away."

God speaks to us, my friends, from every paragraph and sentence of

this Holy Book. It is his voice that we hear; his signature that we behold; his ineffable glory,—which, the more it is viewed in this bright mirror, may the more powerfully command our wonder and praise. When we approach these divine Oracles, and hear the voice of God sometimes speaking out of the midst of the fire, and more often from the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; we may well bend our knee, and take the shoes from off our feet, for the ground on which we stand is holy. O that a divine influence might come down upon us from the Spirit of truth and grace, and a beam from the Sun of righteousness break in upon our minds, as we contemplate these intrinsic glories of the Bible! Let the truth and weight of these revelations sink deep into your ears. As men of this world merely,—as creatures of time,—but especially as the possessors of a begun immortality,—you have a thousand fold deeper interest in the Bible, than in any other, or all other books. It is just as important, that you who have the opportunity, should become acquainted with the Scriptures, and believe, and love, and obey them, as it is that you should be saved. This book offers to you, beloved hearers, that which most you want,—that which is infinitely more to you than all other things,—glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life. I cannot but look upon the prevailing indifference with which the Word of God is regarded, as one of the evils over which we are loudly called to mourn. You send the Bible to the ignorant and destitute; you carry it to every cottage and waft it to every clime;—and thanks to God that you do so;—but to what extent is it studied in your chambers, read in your families, taught to your children? There is no surer evidence of living without God in the world, than living without intimate communion with the Bible. Who that does not mean to remain in impenetrable obduracy; who that does not purpose effectually to grieve away the Holy Spirit; who that does not form the deliberate resolve to close every avenue to the divine influence;—that is not prepared to plunge the dagger of the second death into his own bosom,—can live in the allowed neglect of these Scriptures of God? And if you believe them, and understand them, will you refuse them the submission of your heart and your everlasting obenience? Do you accredit the stupendous truths contained in this Volume? and shall they waken no deep interest, and urge to no solemn preparation for your last account? I beseech you, think seriously of the weighty truths herein revealed from Heaven. There is not one among them all that will not prove a savour of life unto life, or a savour of death unto death. It is even so. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever this stone shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.

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SERMONS VI. & VII.

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THE MEDIATION OF CHRIST, THE GROUND OF THE BELIEVER'S TRIUMPH.

Romans viii. 34.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us.

It is the genius of Christianity, that it gives a new and noble direction to the intellectual powers, while it exerts a controlling and sanctifying influence on the heart and life. It does not, indeed, change the original structure of the mind, but it quickens and elevates the faculties, by employing them upon objects of the most pure and exalted character. I know not whether the apostle Paul, independently of divine inspiration, was more indebted to the original fertility and grandeur of his intellect, or to the all-inspiring influence of the subjects he discusses, for the majesty which pervades the chapter from which my text is taken: but certain it is, that inspiration itself can hardly furnish a parallel to the sublimity with which the argument is here conducted. It is the mighty march of a mind acting in all the dignity of independent greatness, and fired and elevated by a principle no less commanding

than the love of Jesus. The point which the apostle is here immediately labouring to establish, is the superiority of the Gospel to the Mosaic dispensation, in the motives which it furnishes to religious purity and obedience: and if you attend to the process by which he arrives at his triumphant conclusion, you will perceive that, at each successive step, his mind kindles with fresh rapture, and seems to be feasting upon new-discovered glories. After glancing at some of the most prominent peculiarities of the Gospel, all of which strikingly illustrate the happy condition of the Christian, he closes this part of his discourse with a magnificent climax, which mingles the power of a comprehensive genius, the glow of an exquisite sensibility, the triumph of an elevated faith, and the majesty of divine inspiration;—*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

It is the object of the following discourses, TO CONSIDER THE SEVERAL PARTS OF THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST, AS EXHIBITED IN THE TEXT; AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN SECURING THE FINAL TRIUMPH OF THE CHRISTIAN.

I. We will follow the order suggested by the apostle, and endeavour, first, to exhibit A BRIEF VIEW OF THE MEDIATION OF THE SON OF GOD.

1. And here the first thing that presents itself, is the CHARACTER of the personage by whom the mediatorial office is sustained: It is CHRIST that died. On this point, our inquiry shall simply be, *What saith the Scripture?*

To collect all that is said of this wonderful personage, would be to

recite a large portion of the prophetical and historical parts of Revelation. We can only glance at a few prominent passages. The prophet Isaiah describes the character of Christ by these remarkable appellations; *And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.* In the forty-fifth psalm, the same exalted person, (as we are informed by the apostle Paul,) is addressed by the Psalmist in these words: *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.* Paul has declared him to be *God over all blessed for ever*: and again, the same apostle has said, that *by him all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by Him, and for Him.* Says the apostle John, who was permitted to behold the unveiled glories of God; *Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.* And the same apostle has elsewhere said, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* And finally, in the revelation by St. John, Jesus Christ says of himself, *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* And elsewhere, *I am the First, and the Last; I am He that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for ever more, and have the keys of hell and of death.*

But the passages of which those now recited are a specimen, only give a partial view of the character of Christ. It is the very same person who is characterized by the following description: *He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: He hath no form nor comeliness; He was despised and rejected of men. He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? For He was cut off out of the land of the living; and his grave was appointed with the wicked; but with the rich man was his tomb, though he had done no violence, neither was deceit found in his mouth.*

The former part of this wonderful character was displayed during the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, in all the intercourse which He held with his people as the Angel of the covenant; but the latter part was never disclosed, till He assumed our nature and came to dwell upon the earth. But amidst all his humiliation, the glory which He had with the Father *before the world was*, was only partially obscured. It was the Sun shining through an eclipse. An angel from heaven foretold his birth; and a choir of angels announced to the world his advent. At his command, the sightless eyeball received the power of vision, and the tongue of the dumb man was loosed; the withered limbs of the paralytic resumed their office; the victim of leprosy escaped from his loathsomeness, and walked abroad in all the bloom and vigor of health: the iron-bound slumbers of the dead were broken up; the raging of the winds and the waves was composed; and even while He hung upon the cross, nature testified to his Divinity by a mighty convulsion. It is hardly necessary to say, at the close of this brief recital, that his character stands alone in the annals of the universe. Search through the heavens and the earth, and you will *find nothing* with which it admits of comparison.

2. Next to the character of Christ, our text leads us to notice his DEATH. It is Christ that *died*.

I do not deny that purposes were answered in the Divine administration, by the death of Christ, which have never yet been revealed to us; purposes, it may be, even more magnificent than those which relate to our own redemption. There may be other worlds than ours within the dominions of Jehovah, where a spirit of rebellion has been manifested, and the benefits of Christ's death enjoyed. And there may be other worlds still, where the inhabitants have never violated their allegiance to their Almighty Sovereign, in which the revelation of this wonderful fact may serve as a mirror to reflect the brightest of the divine glories. But it is not with other parts of the system that we are so immediately concerned. The death of Christ, for aught we know, may exert an influence of some kind or other, wherever there are intelligent beings; but in respect to ourselves, and the world to which we belong, there is no room for doubt.

Not only the general fact that the death of Christ procures our salva-

tion, but something of the *manner* in which it operates to the accomplishment of this end, is made the subject of distinct revelation. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law*, says the apostle, *being made a curse for us.* Not that the substitution was in every respect literal and exact: that would have been inconsistent with the perfectly holy character of the Son of God: but the sufferings of Christ had such a relation to the divine law, as completely to answer the purposes of God in the punishment of sin, and thus to constitute a proper ground of deliverance from the curse. In the cross of Christ, therefore, the claims of Divine justice are so answered,—the majesty of the Divine law is so maintained,—that God can now be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth. Accordingly, it is agreeable to the uniform tenor of Scripture, that we are redeemed by the *blood* of Christ; and that faith in Him as an atoning sacrifice, is one of the grand conditions of salvation.

Here, brethren, if I mistake not, is the hinge, on which the whole system of Christianity turns. It is the death of Christ, as a propitiation for the sins of the world, which gives the gospel its chief value, as a religion for sinners. Tell me not that He died merely to set an example of pious suffering, or to substantiate his claim as an ambassador of God. I do not deny that these were subordinate ends of his death; but compared with the grand object for which He suffered, they are only as the feeble glimmering of the glow-worm, to the condensed brightness of the noon-day sun. By limiting the influence of Christ's death to his example, you not only set all our immortal hopes afloat, and blot out the glory of the Gospel, but you reflect upon the character of God, by imputing to him the weakness of incurring an amazing expense, without any sufficient end. Believe it, who will, that He who was *the Brightness of the Father's glory*, and who *made all things by the word of his power*, condescended to assume our nature, and die upon the cross, merely to exhibit to the world the faith and constancy of a martyr!

3. But you will ask, if Christ died to make satisfaction for the sins of men, what evidence is there that his atonement has been accepted of God? I answer, thirdly, there is complete evidence in the fact of his RESURRECTION. The apostle adds, *Yea, rather, that is risen again.*

The death of Christ, as we have seen, was the ransom which was paid for our redemption; but it is his resurrection alone, which renders

our faith in his blood a rational act. If He had never come back from the grave, we might have been attracted by the lustre of his example, and had our sympathies awakened by the story of his death, but it would have been delusion to have expected redemption by his blood. But when He came in triumph from the tomb, the scandal and ignominy of the cross were wiped away; and in the power and glory of His resurrection, we may consider God as setting his seal to the efficacy of his atonement. When Jesus *bowed his head, and gave up the ghost*, the sentence of condemnation was virtually reversed; but it was not till he had burst the bands of death, and appeared in the character of a Conqueror, that the believer's justification was fully manifest. '*For*,' as the apostle argues, '*if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life*';—that is, *by his resurrection to life and glory*.

But our view of this grand triumph over the grave will be too limited, unless we consider it as the pledge of our own resurrection. Jesus rose as the Representative of his people; and the connection is not more certain between the vine and the branches, or the head and the members, than between His resurrection and that of all his followers. You perceive, then, on what a firm foundation, this most consoling doctrine of our religion rests. You are not left to deduce it from the subtleties of metaphysics, or to collect it from vague and scattered intimations in the word of God: nay, you have something more than even a positive promise; for it is identified with the most illustrious fact in the history of Christianity. Never were the jeers of infidelity more out of place, than when they are directed against this life-giving doctrine; for, to say nothing of its inherent consolations, it is sustained by evidence, which it is beyond the power of wit or reason to gainsay.

4. The next thing which the apostle notices in reference to the mediatorial work of Christ, is his EXALTATION: *Who is even at the right hand of God.*

The phrase, *at the right hand of God*, is expressive of the highest dignity and authority. In taking possession of the mediatorial throne, Christ has acquired a dominion different from that which he held, as the Sovereign and original Proprietor of all things. It is a dominion

founded on the covenant of redemption, and to continue till the final consummation. It extends to all beings and all events. It is His providence that operates in the natural world with an unwearied and undecaying energy. His hand guides the revolutions of the planets, and the destinies of empires. He setteth up one, and putteth down another, and none can resist his power, or question his right. The same hand is concerned in directing the most insignificant of human affairs; in controlling even the irrational and inanimate creation. The insect that glitters in the sun-beam, or the atom that floats upon the breeze, is as truly the object of his superintendence, as the convulsion of a kingdom, or the extinction of a world. The principalities and powers of Heaven too, the shining ranks of angels, the glorious retinue of seraphim, the innumerable company of the redeemed, are all subject to his authority. The church on earth also looks up to Him as her Lawgiver and her Head; and He dispenses to her, through the ordinances which He has established, a Divine influence; and He has pledged the stability of his throne for her security and triumph. Nor do the powers of darkness, with all their malice and rage, escape from his dominion. Amidst all the weeping and wailing of that world, not a pang of agony is felt, not a shriek of horror is uttered, not a vial of wrath is poured out, but it is in some way or other subject to the mediatorial direction of the Son of God.

But the occasion which shall witness to the most triumphant and awful display of his authority, will be the general Judgment. Before He delivers up the kingdom to the Father, all nations shall be assembled before Him, and He shall separate the good from the bad, *as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.* You may send forth your imagination to collect every image of tenderness and majesty, of burning vengeance and melting compassion, of unutterable joy and overwhelming woe, and you will only have gathered materials for a faint description of this tremendous scene. But in this scene Jesus Christ is to preside. It is from His lips that the sentence is to proceed, agreeably to which, you and I shall pass off to the right hand or the left, according as it is a sentence of acquittal, or a sentence of condemnation.

5. It is in consequence of the exaltation of Christ, and may be considered as one grand purpose of his exaltation, that HE INTERCEDES FOR HIS PEOPLE. The apostle adds, *Who also maketh intercession for us.*

This part of Christ's mediation has particular reference to the sins of his own people; for, notwithstanding the pardoning mercy of God, and the renewing influences of the Spirit, have been extended to them, they are still, in a greater or less degree, the victims of corruption. But He who has promised that they shall be kept by his mighty power through faith unto salvation, has ordained the intercession of Jesus as a means by which this important end is to be secured. In what manner this intercession is carried on, we are not particularly informed; but it seems probable, from the nature of the case, as well as from some intimations in scripture, that it is by presenting his human nature, as an unceasing symbol of His labours and sufferings for the church. He has no need, brethren, in pleading our cause, to make use of many words: action is the most powerful eloquence. The soldier who has bled in his country's battles, has only to bare his bosom, and show you his wounds, and he makes a much stronger appeal to your heart, than he could by the longest and most moving addresses. So our great Intercessor has only to display the prints of the nails in his hands, and of the spear that pierced his body, and how can He fail to be an all-prevalent Advocate? It is through this part of His mediatorial office that Christians are preserved from final apostacy, obtain the forgiveness of sins committed after their renovation, and have a reception secured into the heavenly mansions;—*seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.* How delightful a view of the character of Christ is presented by the fact, that in that world of joy whither He has gone, and amidst all the glories of his exaltation, He never for one moment withdraws his gracious regards from those worms of the dust, for whom he laid down his life; that amidst all their waywardness and wanderings, He should manifest his unchangeable love by a perpetual and all-powerful intercession.

SERMON VII.

ROMANS VIII. 34.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us.

II. HAVING followed the apostle through the several parts of Christ's mediatorial work, we now proceed to consider THEIR INFLUENCE IN SECURING THE BELIEVER'S ACQUITTAL AND TRIUMPH. *Who is he that condemneth?*

1. The believer hath nothing to fear from EXTERNAL AFFLICTIONS.

I do not mean that he may expect an exemption from them; for so long as he continues in the world, he must be a sharer in its trials and sorrows. Nay, it may be that his very religion, full of consolation and hope as it is, may be the means of nerving against him the arm of power, and scattering around him the fire-brands of persecution. But do you know that the situation of the Christian, in the very darkest scenes of adversity, is an enviable situation? Do you know that the arms of everlasting love are beneath that Christian's soul, and that the power of Divine grace is pledged for his consolation and deliverance? That gracious Redeemer, whose blood flowed for his salvation, and who has manifested towards him love stronger than death, hears every groan, observes every tear, and pours into his heart streams of living consolation. Moreover, He has promised that all things shall work together for the Christian's good: not even those afflictions, which lacerate the heart with agony, are excepted: they are included in that gracious covenant, which secures to him all the benefits of redemption. Oh, what affliction may not be accounted light, when it is regarded as an expression of the love of Christ? Is it not an enviable portion to be called to weeping, if our tears may return in a harvest of glory?

Mourning Christian, lift up your head and rejoice. There is a light faintly beaming through that cloud which overshadows you, which will

ere long break forth in all the fulness and splendour of noon-day. At no distant period, you will know that every throb of anguish which you feel, had in it the elements of the most pure and enduring joy. Fear not to go down to the very darkest spot in the vale of adversity. As sure as Jesus is faithful to his promises, He will, in due time, redeem you out of all your trouble: for what *shall separate* you *from the love of Christ?*

2. The mediation of Christ ensures to the believer a triumph over INDWELLING CORRUPTION, and the SUGGESTIONS OF THE ADVERSARY.

There is a conflict, known only to the Christian, which calls for unceasing watchfulness, and constitutes the source of his severest trials; insomuch that it once led an apostle to exclaim, *O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* It results from the partial and occasional prevalence of sin in a soul, which has acquired a prevailing relish for holiness. This enemy of God and man, now appearing in the form of worldly-mindedness, and now in the grosser garb of sensual affection, the Christian cannot find it in his heart deliberately to tolerate; but where is the Christian who will not testify, that as often as he has succeeded in gaining a victory over this internal foe, so often it has returned upon him, and demanded all the vigor of fresh opposition? Do you sometimes yield to the desponding thought, that this war within will ultimately terminate in favour of your enemy? Never fear that, Christian. Before such an event can take place, the pillars of the mediatorial kingdom must fall, the intercession of Jesus must prove ineffectual, and the grand purposes of his exaltation be defeated. Do you sometimes tremble, lest the insidious attacks of the adversary should succeed, and in spite of all your vigilance, and all your activity, you should finally fall a victim to his wiles? Tremble you may for your own weakness; but it is unworthy of a soul that has been washed in redeeming blood, and has the gracious assistance of the Spirit made sure to him, to shudder at the approach of any enemy. That exalted Redeemer who has gone into the heavens, watches every plot, and every movement of the adversary against you; and He has set bounds to his career of temptation which he can never pass. Great and formidable as this enemy is, there is One greater than he; One who has acquired a glorious triumph over the powers of darkness, which their combined energies can never reverse; One who has taken you into his own family, and identified your interest with the interests

of his kingdom. Were it possible for the adversary to pluck you out of the Redeemer's hands, he would gain a victory which would kindle a smile of malignant exultation on the countenance of every fiend in hell; for he would have succeeded in overturning the whole fabric of Christ's mediation, and in rolling a torrent of desolation through all the dominions of Jehovah.

3. The believer, in consequence of the mediation of Christ, gains a triumph over DEATH.

I am not here going to dispute the fact, that death is a relentless and terrible enemy: and if any one is so intrenched in the carelessness of a worldly mind, or the hardihood of philosophical unbelief, as to question this fact, I would bid him correct his error, by a visit to that bed-side, where the conflict with this enemy is actually going forward. Let him go, at that awful moment, when the distance between time and eternity is contracted to a point; when the objects of the two worlds meet and mingle in the twilight of life. Let him watch the fading expression of that sinking eye; and wipe the cold damps of death from that pale and fallen cheek; and listen to that awful groan, which is the signal of a departing spirit. Let him count the fluttering pulse, till he can count no longer; and then let him gaze upon that crazy, dissolving tabernacle, and think that the soul is gone! If he be not a monster, instead of a man, he is now cured of his insensibility to the terrors of death. Laugh at the approach of this king of terrors, if you will,—but let not human nature stand charged with the awful outrage: rather confess that you have put off the character of a man, and put on that of a fiend.

But notwithstanding death is, in itself, an event so terrible, so appalling to the courage of the stoutest heart, charge me not with inconsistency, if I say that the Christian may reasonably rise above its terrors. I do not mean that nature, even in the Christian, will not pay her tribute of dread to this formidable enemy; and doubtless there are cases, in which, for wise purposes, a full share of religious consolation is not granted, while in the immediate conflict. But I mean that every believer in Jesus has a just and legitimate ground for triumph. I mean, Christians, that He whom you adore as your Redeemer and your Head, has been down into the dark dominions of Death, and encountered the monster, and taken away his sting; and that in virtue of your union,

to Him, you have a share in the benefits of this glorious victory. Avoid passing through the dark valley, you cannot: it is the only passage from this world to heaven: But even there, where nothing but gloom thickens upon the sinner,—where no sounds but those of vengeance, strike upon his ear,—you may walk in the light of the Divine countenance, and be charmed by the music of attending angels. The grave may seem to you a cold and dark habitation; but as sure as Jesus has risen, the iron-bands which confine you there, will ere long break; and that mouldering body will come forth in purity and splendour, to constitute a part of your Redeemer's triumph.

4. I will only add, fourthly, that the triumph of the Christian, in virtue of the mediation of Christ, extends to ALL THE POWERS OF DARKNESS: Even with respect to hell itself, and all the enemies which it embosoms, he may ask in the language of triumph, *Who is he that condemneth?*

If there be any ground for a final triumph of those malignant spirits over the Christian, it must be, either because his admission to heaven would involve a reflection upon the justice of God, or because his character would be offensive to Infinite Holiness. But neither of these is the fact. The atonement of Christ which was made on his behalf, and in which he trusts, has satisfied every claim which justice could urge: the Spirit of Christ in his sanctifying operations, ultimately removes every vestige of pollution; and the intercession of Christ is ever prevalent for his perseverance in the way to heaven. If then, the powers of darkness ever gain possession of his soul, (with reverence be it spoken,) it must prove the redeeming blood and renewing grace of Christ to be inefficacious; and he must finally have an opposite destination from that for which all Heaven has been interested to prepare him. Here, Christian, is the crowning part of your victory. And remember, that your Redeemer's mediation not only shuts the door of hell,—but it opens the gate of heaven. You are not only delivered from the power of every enemy, but you are put in possession of a glorious inheritance. All things are yours. Justly, therefore, may you exclaim, under the pressure of affliction, in your conflict with yourself, amid the agonies of death, and when your immortal soul, escaping the vigilance of malignant spirits, passes the threshold of the world of glory,—justly may you exclaim,—*Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died:*

yea, rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us.

On a review of this subject, we learn, first, what constitutes the *distinctive character*, and the *essential glory* of the Gospel.

All the false systems of religion which have existed in the world, whether they have been professedly opposed to the Bible, or professedly drawn from it—have entirely mistaken the exigencies of human nature, and of course, have utterly failed in their attempts to provide for them. They have laid "the flattering unction" to human pride, by denying the existence of any deep moral disorder in the heart, and the necessity of any supernatural remedy. And when reason and conscience have, for a season, prevailed, and given the lie to this view of man's character and condition, and waked up the gloomy apprehensions of nature in the sinner's bosom; Oh, how has he listened in vain for some voice which should speak to him in accents of forgiveness! But no such deceitful dealing is chargeable upon the Gospel. In distinction from every other system of religion, it reveals to man the naked exigencies of his condition, and speaks plainly to him of the terrors of the wrath of God. And having dealt thus honestly, it proceeds to disclose to him the mediation of Jesus Christ; in virtue of which, it bids him rise up from the bed of spiritual death, and walk abroad in all the peace, and joy, and dignity of an heir of heaven. Here then, I repeat, is the distinctive feature of Christianity; and every system of religion in which this feature is not found—whatever else it may be—is not *Gospel*. It may assume the name, and claim the honor; but with that which constitutes its life and power, it has no communion.

And as the mediation of Christ constitutes the leading characteristic of the Gospel, so also it imparts to it its *chief glory*. Admit that Jesus Christ died as an atoning sacrifice, and rose as the first fruits of them that slept, and that he now lives in heaven as a prevailing Intercessor; in other words, admit the scriptural view of his mediation, and I see enough in the gospel to justify all the interest which it has excited, whether on earth or in heaven. I wonder not that the sinner, burdened with pollution, and harrowed with guilt, betakes himself to it as his last and only refuge. I am not surprised that he upon whom this world's

misfortunes thicken, should press the gospel to his bosom, and find a stream of living consolation pouring in upon his desolate heart. I am at no loss to account for the fact, that the gospel exerts such a sustaining influence in the valley of death; that the falling of the earthly tabernacle is so often attended by a shout of victory over the king of terrors. And when I open the volume of inspiration, I am not surprised to find how much the gospel awakens the interest, and engages the scrutiny of angels; or in what strains of admiration and ecstacy, its praises are celebrated by all the inhabitants of heaven. But if you blot out this bright feature of Christianity, or if, while you call Christ, Mediator, you virtually disown him in that character, by denying the atoning efficacy of his death, I know not what there is left in the gospel, to meet the necessities of the wretched on earth, or to justify the acclamations of the redeemed in heaven. If I really believed that Jesus Christ was only a *teacher*, I should feel that it were but mockery to the miseries of a fellow mortal, if I were to direct him to the gospel for consolation; and though he were to sit down and weep his life away in an agony of despair, I should still be obliged, in justice to my own convictions, to tell him that here is no refuge for the guilty.

2. We learn from this subject, *the dignity of the Christian character.*

This is the grand distinction in comparison with which every other fades into insignificance. You may be rich in this world's goods; but wealth is perishable, and in one hour of unsuccessful enterprise, your property may all be given to the winds. You may be loaded with this world's honors; but human applause is capricious and uncertain; and what will become of the laurels of earthly greatness, when your head is laid in the dust? But the dignity of the Christian depends on none of these frivolous and artificial distinctions. It depends on nothing short of his union to the Son of God; a union which is formed by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and which secures to him an interest in the incorruptible glories of Christ's mediation. He belongs to that redeemed family, which is to act so distinguished a part on the theatre of heaven; and the ages of eternity will only contribute to brighten his crown, and to enhance for ever the glory of his exaltation.

But how different, how very different is the opinion, which is formed of the Christian, by the children of the world. By some, he is regard-

ed as a miserable enthusiast; by others, as buried in austerity and gloom. His noble birth, his distinguished friends, his high destination, are all overlooked or forgotten. But, take heed, ye who pride yourselves upon the distinctions of life, lest the day should come, when *he* will appear in triumph, and *you* in dishonor. In that cottage, where poverty and distress reside, and which you might think yourself dishonored to enter, there lives a candidate for all the honors of the New Jerusalem. There is the joy of contentment even now; and in the hour of death, there will be the triumph of faith; and after that, there will be an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. *You* may despise him, and shrink from his society, but *angels* will rejoice in it. Jesus the Mediator will own him as one of his ransomed people, and place upon his head a crown of life. But to what honor can you look forward, who build all your hopes upon the world? To the honor of a name which will perish, as soon as your body is hidden in the tomb: to the honor of a decorated coffin, a splendid funeral, a towering monument—it may be, a lying epitaph—which will tell the passing stranger of virtues which were never yours. And is this all? Teach us, Great God, the meanness of worldly glory, and help us to aspire to the exalted dignity of the Christian!

3. The subject teaches the Christian a lesson of *humility*.

Who art thou, disciple of Christ, that thou shouldst be an heir to such a glorious inheritance? What hast thou done to entitle thee to the high privileges of a child of God? Thou art a creature of yesterday—a worm of the dust; and till lately thou wert a child of wrath, and a rebel against Jehovah. And such thou wouldst always have been, had it not been for the power of redeeming grace. Yes, Christian, He who *brought* you *up out of the horrible pit* and *miry clay, and set* your *feet upon a rock, and established* your *goings, and hath put a new song in* your *mouth*, and hath sustained and shielded you ever since by the arm of his power,—he is your covenant God and Redeemer. Wherefore, when you praise *Him*, forget not to abase *yourself*. When you have the brightest view of the riches of divine grace in your redemption; when faith mounts up nearest to the Redeemer's throne, and dwells with most intense delight upon his glories, and anticipates, with firmest assurance, a residence in his kingdom—then does it become you to bend with deepest humility in token of your unworthiness; and if you ever mingle your voice with the voices of the redeemed, you will

not more certainly ascribe *blessing, and honor, and thanksgiving to the Lamb that was slain*, than you will add, *Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, O Lord, be all the glory.*

Finally: The subject impressively teaches us the *guilt of unbelief.*

It is unbelief which rejects the gospel; and the guilt of it is proportioned to the excellence and glory of the gospel. But the gospel is supremely excellent and glorious: it is the brightest revelation of the character and purposes of God, which, so far as we know, has ever been made to the universe. Unbelief, therefore, must involve aggravated guilt, and lead to a fearful condemnation. But you say, perhaps, that you are not an unbeliever, as you neither deny the divinity of revelation, or have aught to say against its doctrines. Fellow mortal, be not deceived. Believe me, there is a *practical* unbelief, which as really pours contempt upon the mediation of Christ, as the most boldly avowed infidelity. If it has more of the external appearance of religion, it is more at war with consistency; for while it *acknowledges* the truth and importance of the gospel, it *acts* as though this gospel were neither true nor important. And I will tell you the marks of this unbelief, that you may know how to detect its operations; for it is insidious and deceitful; and has no doubt conducted multitudes to perdition, who had never doubted that they were on the way to glory. If, then, you do not love the commandments of God, and cordially approve of his character; if you shrink from that self-denial which the gospel requires, and give yourself up to the control of sinful passions; or if you are satisfied with a decent exterior, and feel no concern for the inner man of the heart; or if you are sunk down into a state of stupidity, and worldly-mindedness, and forgetfulness of God, and neglect of prayer—then you have the most alarming symptoms of an evil heart of unbelief. Let no one think that the omniscient eye will not penetrate the thin disguise of merely a correct creed, or a credible profession. That eye will search to the very bottom of the heart; and will dart lightning into every soul that puts on the exterior of a Christian, and yet does not cordially embrace the Saviour. Beware, then, of the spirit of unbelief. However little it may be regarded by the world, or however deep it may lie buried in the heart, it contains the elements of a tremendous curse; for He whose decisions are irreversible, hath declared, *He that believeth not shall be damned.*

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Go....Teach all Nations....*Mat.* xxviii, 19.

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SERMONS VIII. & IX.

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THE EVIDENCE AND DUTY OF BEING ON THE LORD'S SIDE.

EXODUS, XXXII. 26.

Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side?

WHEN this solemn question was asked, the camp of Israel was in a very awful situation. *Moses* had been in the Mount, conversing with God, and receiving the Law from His lips, forty days and forty nights. *And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the Mount, they gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.* O what an amazing scene was here! That the very people who, a few weeks before, had witnessed the wonderful displays of Divine power on their behalf, in *Egypt*, and at the *Red-Sea;* and afterwards the still more terrifick wonders of Mount *Sinai*, when *the thunderings, and lightnings, and voices and earthquake* made the whole camp to tremble, and even *Moses*, familiar as he was with God, *exceedingly to fear and quake;*—that this very people should so soon have forgotten all their signal deliverances, and all their solemn vows, and begged to be placed under the guidance of a dumb idol,—presents an example of infatuation and depravity, as enormous as it was degrading. But so it was. The request was made. And, still more astonishing to tell! *Aaron* complied with it. Under his direction, the people, in their idolatrous phrenzy, made a Golden Calf, and fell down before it, and

worshipped it, and cried out, *These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.*

When *Moses* was informed of this besotted folly and wickedness on the part of the people, he immediately *turned and went down from the Mount*, and *Joshua* with him; and after remonstrating with *Aaron* and with the people on account of their sin, *he took the Calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.* Having done this,—for the purpose of making a solemn discrimination between the innocent and the guilty, and of preparing to execute the judgment of God against the latter,—he came forth and *stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side?*

The spirit of this question, my friends, is just as applicable to us, as it was to the people of *Israel* three and thirty centuries ago. Suppose the Saviour were now to come, in his glorified body, into this assembly, and, standing visibly in the midst of us, were to ask—*Who is on the Lord's side?* what answer would each of us give Him? What answer would candour *compel* us to give? Well, that Divine and Omniscient Redeemer *is* present with us, though our bodily eyes see Him not; and he *does* ask each of us, in his Word, and in his Providence, this solemn question. Let me, then, beseech every one to answer it to his own conscience as in the presence of Him *who cannot be deceived, and will not be mocked.* And that you may be enabled to answer it with the more intelligence and certainty, I shall endeavour, *First*, to DESCRIBE THE CHARACTER OF THOSE WHO ARE ON THE LORD'S SIDE; and *Secondly*, to ASSIGN SOME REASONS WHY WE ARE ALL BOUND TO BE ON THAT SIDE. In other words, I propose to speak of the EVIDENCE and the DUTY of being on *the Lord's side.*

I. The first question to be considered is, What is implied in being *on the Lord's side?* What is the character of those of whom this may be said?

Now, this question evidently presupposes that there *is* a SIDE which may be emphatically called *the Lord's side.* And can any thinking man contemplate our world, or look into the Bible, without seeing and feeling that this is really the case? There is a controversy between God and rebellious man. God is on the side of truth, order, and holiness. The rebels are on the side of folly, disorder, and sin. They have risen up, without the least cause, in opposition to the rightful Sovereign of the universe; and their hostility to him is implacable. They dislike his character, his truth, his precepts, his government, although they are infinitely perfect. This warfare, so unreasonable and atrocious on man's part, has been raging for near six thousand years, and is still kept up with unabated enmity. The object of Jeho val is

most wise and benevolent. It is to maintain untarnished the glory of his perfections, the honour of his law, and the authority of his most perfect and blessed government; and to make such a display of all these to his intelligent and moral kingdom, as shall ultimately promote the greatest happiness of that kingdom. By *the Lord's side*, therefore, is obviously meant, the side of wisdom, of holiness, and of true enjoyment; the side which our blessed Saviour came down from heaven, and made himself an atoning sacrifice to promote and maintain; the side, of course, which all good beings, on earth and in heaven, espouse and love; and which nothing but infatuation and wickedness ever prompted any creature to oppose.

The question before us further presupposes, that there are those who are *not* on *the Lord's side*. The very terms of it, as asked by *Moses*, plainly imported that the men of that generation were not *all* on the right side. Far from it. They were greatly divided. We know not what proportion, but a large number, were in the ranks of rebellion. So it was then; so it has ever been, since the time of *Cain* and *Abel;* and so it is now. The great mass of mankind are in arms against the righteous Governour of the universe. This is the case, indeed, by nature, with ALL. But some, blessed be the riches of Jehovah's grace, have laid down the weapons of their hostility, have left the camp of the rebels, and come in, and accepted the offers of reconciliation. Now, to one or the other of these parties all mankind belong. Yes, my brethren, those who have penitently returned and submitted, and those who still stand out in their rebellion—God and mammon—divide the population of our globe between them. We cannot say of any individual of our race that he belongs to neither of these parties. Our blessed Saviour has unquestionably decided this point, when he pronounces, with solemn emphasis, *He that is not for me, is against me.* Let none, then, flatter themselves that, although they have no positive evidence that they are *on the Lord's side*, they may yet take comfort in the hope that they are not on the side of the enemy. This is a miserable delusion. There can be no neutrality here. If you are not *on the Lord's side*, you are on the *side* of his arch-adversary; and, remaining such, must be treated accordingly.

Once more; the question before us presupposes, that it is of the utmost importance that the point which it presses, be decided. *Moses*, undoubtedly, believed that interests of unspeakable consequence were involved in the solemn interrogatory, *then;* and are interests of less consequence, think you, involved in it *at present?* Can any rational being doubt that the solution of the question, whether we are the friends or the enemies of God, is of infinite moment? Oh, no. If ever a question embraced OUR ALL, this is that question. Nay, it not only ought to be de-

cided, but it ought to be decided *now*; without the delay of another hour; before we take one more step in the journey of life. Eternal interests are at stake, which must remain in the deepest uncertainty and jeopardy, so long as this point is undetermined. Rational and accountable creature! hastening to the judgment-seat of Christ,—let me beseech you to apply yourself without sophistry, and without evasion to this all important inquiry.

The question then recurs—What is implied in being *on the Lord's side?* I answer, in the first place generally,

1. They alone are *on the Lord's side*, who are ON THE SIDE OF HIS TRUTH; who believe and embrace the fundamental doctrines of his Word. It can, by no means, my friends—whatever some may insinuate to the contrary—it can by no means be considered a matter of small moment, what your doctrinal belief on the great subject of religion may be. If all holy practice be founded on holy principle; if the incorruptible seed of all holy principle be truth; if men, as our blessed Lord expressly declares, are *sanctified by the truth;* if those who receive or teach *another gospel*, that is, a gospel essentially different from that which is contained in the Bible, are to be held "*accursed*," as the inspired apostle pronounces; in a word, if there be "*heresies*" which are "*damnable*," as another apostle expressly declares;—then we are demonstrably led to the conclusion—that to be *on the Lord's side*, is to be on the side of his fundamental truth; and that those who reject this, cannot be the cordial friends of him who is the Author and Teacher of truth.

We are by no means, indeed, to suppose, that *every degree* of doctrinal error is an evidence of enmity to God. If this were the case, probably no man living would be found *on the Lord's side;* because *no man*, it is probable, is absolutely perfect in his *creed*, any more than in his *practice*. Yet, on the other hand, there are limits beyond which doctrinal error is manifestly incompatible with genuine piety. How *much* error a man must embrace before it becomes evident that he is not a Christian, is not for a fallible mortal to decide. Yet when we have ascertained what the *fundamental*, the absolutely *essential* doctrines of the Gospel are—and to ascertain these, will not be very difficult to those who have the Bible in their hands—we are, of course, perfectly warranted in pronouncing, that those who reject them, are not *on the Lord's side*. They reject that without which no man can be said to receive the Gospel, and, consequently, without which no man is a Christian. But, to be more particular,

2. They only are *on the Lord's side*, who are ON THE SIDE OF HIS REVEALED CHARACTER; who love him supremely, on account of his infinite excellence, and who rejoice in all his adorable perfections.

All will allow, without hesitation, that those Israelites who turned away from the true God, and gave their worship to a miserable idol, were not on the side of Jehovah. So *Moses*, under Divine guidance, decided concerning all such persons; and therefore, inflicted upon them a penalty as ignominious as it was terrible. But there are many other idols besides those of gold and silver, stone and wood, An idol is any thing which usurps the place of God in the hearts of his rational creatures. Accordingly the inspired Apostle expressly declares that *covetousness is idolatry*. And so is inordinate love to any created object. That individual, then, whoever he may be; however externally fair and blameless his deportment; however confident his profession; who places his highest affections on any thing in this world; whether it be wealth; or honours; or relatives; or pleasures; or splendid living,—makes it as perfectly manifest that he is not a friend of God, as if he bowed down, every day of his life, to a graven image. *Whosoever*, says an inspired Apostle, *will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God. Ye cannot*, says the Saviour, *serve God and mammon.* And again, *He that loveth father or mother, wife or children, brethren or sisters, more than me, is not worthy of me: he cannot be my disciple.*

He, then, who is *on the Lord's side*, not only loves God with supreme affection; but he loves him, primarily, on account of his own infinite and eternal excellence. He cherishes a cordial complacency in all the Divine attributes. He is reconciled to them all, approves them all, takes pleasure in the contemplation of them all. If he could accomplish it by a wish, he would have no perfection of his Maker either laid aside or altered. He rejoices unfeignedly in the unspotted holiness, the inflexible justice, and the terrible majesty of God, as well as in his goodness, mercy, and grace. In other words, he rejoices in the real, scriptural, and complete character of God. He sees a glory in all that Jehovah is, as well as in all that he does, which inspires delight, confidence and joy. His heart goes forth, too, in habitual gratitude to God, for all the bounty of his Providence, and for all the riches of his grace. He feels himself a debtor to both, beyond the power of language to express. So that he is able, from the heart, to say with the holy Psalmist, *Lord, whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee.* But further—

3. They only are *on the Lord's side*, who are ON THE SIDE OF HIS GOSPEL; who have sincerely fallen in with the plan of reconciliation which he has revealed; have come forth from the camp of the enemy, and been *joined to the Lord in one Spirit.* What would you say to a number of individuals, in an army of traitors, who should believe and allege they were friendly to their government, while they remained associated with its enemies! and co-operated with them in all their

plans and measures? Would you not indignantly reject their claim? Would you not say to them—'Come forth from the camp of the rebels; accept of the pardon offered you; and show yourselves loyal citizens, and we will believe you.' So it is with those who are by nature enemies of God. Until they cordially repent of their enmity, and lay down their arms, and accept of the offered terms of reconciliation, and come forth from the ranks of rebellion, and practically manifest their friendship, they must, undoubtedly, be considered as enemies still. Let no one, then, imagine that he is *on the Lord's side*, who is not a friend to the blessed Redeemer; who has not humbly and penitently accepted of him, as the foundation of his hope, and the life of his soul; who has not cordially embraced his humbling and self-denying terms of mercy. Hence, *repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ*, are represented in Scripture as the very first steps in Gospel obedience. And the benign proclamation of that Gospel is, *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

This acceptance of the Saviour, as was intimated, is always connected with *coming out from the camp of the enemy*, and *showing, by our spirit and pursuits, that we belong to Christ.* To be *on the Lord's side*, does not, indeed, imply withdrawing from society, and indulging in the moroseness and gloom of monastick seclusion. The religion of Jesus Christ is a social, benevolent religion. It requires those who profess to obey it, to *shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation;* and to endeavour, by an amiable, pure and heavenly conversation, to win all around them to the service of their Master. When, therefore, they are exhorted and profess to *come out from the world*, the meaning is, that they are no longer *conformed to the world;* that they have separated themselves from the maxims, the follies, and the criminal habits of the world; that they have *no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather*, by their conduct, habitually *reprove them;* that they withdraw, not only from every form of open corruption, but also from many of the more decent forms of recreation and social indulgence, which the world allow, and pronounce innocent; but which all experience shows to be unfriendly to a life of communion with God. They *confess Christ before men*, not merely by going, at stated seasons, to a sacramental table, but also by daily manifesting the power of his religion in their spirit and conversation. In short, they live, in some measure, as those who are habitually *seeking a better country; that is an heavenly;* whose treasure is in heaven, whose hearts are there also, and who are daily ascending thither in holy contemplation and spiritual desires. Believe it, my friends, if you would really be *on the*

Lord's side, you must decisively take your stand, practically, as well as in words, with those who are represented as a *chosen generation, a peculiar people.* Hence, the solemn address of heaven's King is—*Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

4. Again; they alone can justly be said to be *on the Lord's side*, who are ON THE SIDE OF HIS LAW; who delight in his will, rejoice in his government, and strive to obey him in all things.

This is what the inspired Apostle emphatically calls, *loving not in word only, but in deed and in truth.* And, accordingly, the Saviour himself declares, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* And again, *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* And, in accordance with the Saviour's words, *John*, the *beloved disciple*, with awful solemnity pronounces—*He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* Holy obedience, my friends, enters, essentially into the character of the Christian. Our blessed Saviour did *not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it.* He did not come to purchase for his followers a license to sin; but to purchase for them a deliverance from the dominion, as well as the guilt of sin. Hence, the genuine, scriptural evidence that you are *on the Lord's side*, is exactly proportioned to the evidence of your SANCTIFICATION. Accordingly, the followers of Christ are represented in scripture as *saints*, that is, *sanctified ones;* they are said to be *chosen in Christ, that they might be holy and without blame before him in love.* Nay, the real friend of Christ, not only *aims* and *endeavours* to obey him, but he also *loves* to obey him. He *delights in his law after the inward man.* It is *his meat and drink* to obey the will of his beloved Saviour. His obedience is not merely external, but real and cordial; not partial, but universal; not temporary, merely, but persevering. No mere man, indeed, in this life, ever did, or ever will perfectly obey the divine law. *If any man says that he has no sin, he deceives himself, and the truth is not in him.* But he of whom we speak *desires* perfection, *breathes* after perfection, and is daily *humbled* and *grieved* that he falls short of it. Whatever God has appointed or commanded, he who is *on the Lord's side*, so far as he is acquainted with it, is disposed to respect and honour. The sabbath of the Lord, he feels bound to venerate and to sanctify. The sanctuary, and all its ordinances he loves, and delights to attend. He regards prayer as a privilege as well as a duty. In short, whatever imperfection may actually attend his obedience—and this imperfection is acknowledged by none more readily, and lamented

by none more deeply, than by himself; he does not allow himself to neglect or slight any thing that God has ordained; but desires and strives to *walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.*

5. Lastly; they alone are *on the Lord's side*, who are ON THE SIDE OF HIS HONOUR; who habitually and supremely seek his glory. As Jehovah made all things for his own glory; as this is the ultimate end which he himself has in view in all his dispensations both of Providence and of grace; so he commands all his creatures to make it *their* highest object. And all the children of his grace, in some good measure, do this. They heartily espouse the cause of God, and take a *deep* and tender interest in it as their own. Their aim, and in some degree their attainment, is to hold all other interests in subordination to this. They do not, indeed, neglect their worldly affairs. Nay, commonly, they are more diligent, systematick, and orderly in their temporal business, than most others. But still *they seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.* The spread of the Gospel; the revival of religion; the prosperity of Zion; the salvation of souls; the honour of the Redeemer—these are the objects which above all others they esteem and seek. They are grieved when the Saviour is dishonoured. They *mourn*, from the heart, over all the error, the profaneness, and the profligacy which they witness around them. And while they turn away with abhorrence from every thing, either in principle or in practice dishonouring to God; it is their meat and drink to exalt the name of God; to honour his institutions; to benefit his people; to extend the knowledge of his religion; to instruct the ignorant; to reclaim the vicious; to assist in sending the Gospel to the dark places of the earth; and, in a word, over all the lurking places of ignorance, and sin, and misery, to assist in shedding the rays of knowledge, faith, love, joy, and happiness. These are the favourite objects of all who are *on the Lord's side.* For these they labour, and plan, and contribute, and pray. And into the blessed scale of these interests, they delight to cast the whole weight of their desires, their exertions, and their example from day to day.

Such are they who are *on the Lord's side.* Here, then, my friends, before we proceed to the second head of discourse, which will be reserved for another opportunity,—let us make a solemn pause, and inquire, whether *we* have *any part or lot* in the character which has been described. You will perceive that, in delineating this character, I have not dwelt on the peculiarities of any particular denomination of christians; but upon those great principles of our common christianity, which all the friends of evangelical truth concur in maintaining. How stands this great concern, then, my beloved hearers, with regard to each of *you?* Are you *on the Lord's side*, or are you leagued with his enemies? The testimony by which this question is to be decided, is not

remote nor obscure; but plain, simple, and at hand. Let me beseech you to review with impartiality the marks of friendship to God which have been laid down. Do you take the part of Jehovah's truth against hereticks, and hold fast the fundamental doctrines of his Word? Do you supremely love his character and service, preferring them above those of any other master? Do you *delight in his law after the inward man*, and unfeignedly mourn over all your known departures from it? Have you, with penitence and faith, renounced your rebellion, come forth from its ranks, and submitted to the Saviour, as the *Lord your righteousness, and the Lord your strength?* Is sin your grief and burden, and is it your habitual, governing desire to be delivered from its pollution, as well as its guilt, and to obey the will of Christ in all things? Is the honour of the Redeemer dear to your hearts, and the extension and glory of his kingdom *preferred above your chief joy?* If you can, in the fear of God, answer these questions in the affirmative, you are *on the Lord's side;* and have a right to the privileges and comforts of this relation. But if not, you are still aliens and enemies. Fellow mortals! can you conceive of an inquiry more momentous than this? Can you consent that it should remain for one hour undecided? Or, if compelled, in candour, to decide it *against yourselves*,—can you remain a moment at ease? Remember that there is a solemn trial just before you. You may turn away from this inquiry *now;* but you cannot evade it long. And, Oh, when the decision comes, where will you then be? On the right hand, or on the left? Great Searcher of hearts! thou knowest! *O search us, and try us, and lead us in the way everlasting!*

SERMON IX.

EXODUS, XXXII. 26.—*Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side?*

HAVING endeavoured, with the utmost plainness, to show what is implied in being *on the Lord's side*, I come now,

II. TO OFFER SOME REASONS WHY WE OUGHT, ALL OF US, TO BE ON THE LORD'S SIDE.

But can it be necessary to *reason* on such a subject? Yes, my friends, it is necessary. Impenitent men are so infatuated, so completely beside themselves, in a spiritual sense, that they need all the entreaty and expostulation which we can employ for their benefit. Ac-

cordingly, Jehovah himself condescends to *reason* with his rebellious creatures, and to *beseech* them to be reconciled to him. *Come now*, saith He, by the Prophet, *and let us* REASON *together*.

1. The first reason which I shall offer why we ought all to be *on the Lord's side*, is, that IT IS THE SIDE OF TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS. It is, emphatically, THE RIGHT SIDE. In espousing the side of any individual or party, in a worldly controversy, we are always in some danger of being betrayed into error, or, at least, into excess. For, as no man is perfect, so almost every cause or party to which we can attach ourselves in the present life, has some mixture of imperfection, which a wise man sees and regrets, and which he dares not, as a conscientious man, advocate throughout. But in the case before us, we are in no such danger. The cause of God is infinitely wise and righteous, without the possibility of mistake or injustice. In the great controversy existing between Him and rebellious man, God is wholly in the right, and man altogether in the wrong. God is a holy, wise and equitable Sovereign: while man is an unreasonable, perverse, and infatuated rebel. God requires nothing of the rebel, but that which he ought, upon every principle, immediately to perform. While the disobedient creature, himself being judge, is constantly pursuing a course as irrational as it is criminal. It is evident, then, that all who take the side of God in this controversy, take the right side; the side which is holy, and just, and good, in an infinite degree. I appeal to you, then, my friends, whether we are not all solemnly bound to be on this side? Is not being on this side the most reasonable, and in every respect the most worthy of our rational nature? Is it not the side of all that is excellent, and blessed, and benevolent, and heavenly, against all that is criminal, and degrading, and destructive in the creation of God?

2. Again; as another reason why you ought to be *on the Lord's side*, let me beseech you to consider seriously ON WHAT SIDE YOU ARE, IF YOU ARE NOT ON HIS. If you are not on the side of God, you are on the opposite, hostile side. It is impossible, as was before said, to stand neuter in this controversy. You *must*—you assuredly *do* side with the one or the other; the kingdom of light, or the kingdom of darkness; God or mammon; Christ or Belial. There is no other alternative. If you only *decline* to take the Lord's side, that is enough to condemn you. That itself is taking side *against* him. Only "forget" Him, and his word declares that you will be regarded and treated as traitors against his government. It is painful to say it; but as long as you do not heartily take *the Lord's side*, it is a solemn truth, that you are "in league with death, and in covenant with hell." You are "enlisted under the banner of the prince of darkness, and acting in concert with the devil and his angels." My dear hearers, who yet re-

main aliens from *the covenant of promise*, can you think of this, and not tremble? Can you recollect without horror, that, as long as you remain in this situation, whether you go out, or come in; whether you sit down or rise up; wherever you go, or whatever you do, you are joining with the enemies of the God that made you; are taking the side of rebellion against that government which is the only hope of the intelligent creation? Creature of God! dying, yet immortal! I ask again, canst thou think of this without deep alarm? Canst thou think of standing in direct hostility with infinite Wisdom, infinite Power, and infinite Benevolence? Art thou willing to be found in league with all that is evil and at war with all that is good in the universe. If God be against thee, who can be for thee? *Canst thou contend with Him? Canst thou thunder with a voice like Him? Woe to him that striveth with his Maker!*

3. Consider further, as another reason why you ought to be *on the Lord's side*, HOW MUCH THE LORD HAS DONE FOR YOU. Consider how often he has been your Helper, your Protector, and your Benefactor; how often he has appeared for your deliverance, and how rich have been the bounties of his Providence. To this heavenly Sovereign are every one of you indebted for your existence; for all your faculties; for the distinguished rank which you hold in the scale of being. To Him are you indebted for every breath you draw, for every moment you live, for every comfort you have ever enjoyed, for every valuable acquirement you have made, for every hope you are permitted to cherish. To Him are you indebted, above all, for the gift of a Saviour; for the gracious offer of peace, and pardon, and sanctification, and eternal life and glory by his atoning sacrifice; for the gift of the Holy Spirit to strive with you; and for all your precious privileges, temporal and spiritual. And will you hesitate—can you doubt, whether to be on the side of this Benefactor or not? Can you consent to remain another hour in hostility against your Maker, your Protector, the bountiful Author of all your mercies? Forbid it gratitude! Forbid it every rational generous principle of our nature!

4. A fourth reason, why we ought all to be *on the Lord's side*, is, that IT IS THE SIDE OF HAPPINESS; the only side which can effectually secure our real enjoyment. I am aware that multitudes make a very different estimate of this matter. They think piety one of the greatest foes to personal enjoyment; and, therefore, they deliberately postpone all serious attention to the subject, to some future period—perhaps to old age, that they may, in the mean time, enjoy life. Just as reasonably might a man, labouring under a loathsome and painful disease, decline or postpone being healed, lest the recovering his health might interfere with his comfort. O the amazing, the almost incredible in-

fatuation of men! Never did creatures calling themselves rational, yield to a more degrading and miserable delusion! The fact is directly the reverse of what an impenitent and unbelieving world suppose. *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. The way of transgressors is hard. But the path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more to the perfect day.* Reconciliation and friendship with God, really form the basis of all rational and true enjoyment. The graces and duties of the christian life, are not only consistent with happiness, but will be found, when examined, to form THE VERY ESSENCE OF IT. What are faith, and hope, and love, and joy, and trust in God, and resignation, and contentment, and all *the fruits of the Spirit*—but another name for the truest felicity of which man is capable here below? Yes, brethren, just in proportion as we *walk with God*, we bring down heaven into our souls. *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. The way of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. Happy the people that are in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord!*

5. Further; let me entreat those who are not yet *on the Lord's side*, to consider that THEY HAVE NOT ONE REASONABLE PLEA FOR BEING ON THE SIDE OF SATAN. I know, indeed, that the children of this world frequently offer excuses for the course they take, which may appear to them plausible, and in which they intrench themselves with great apparent confidence. But they are all delusive; most of them impious insults to the God of heaven; and such as they would be ashamed of offering in reference to their temporal affairs. Do you say, my impenitent hearer, that you are *unable* to quit the side of sin and Satan, and to join that of the Lord? There never was a more deceitful or hollow-hearted plea. You labour under no other inability in this case, but that which arises from your depravity, your criminal disaffection to your rightful Sovereign. It is just as if a thief, or a murderer, arrayed before a human tribunal, should plead as an apology for his crime, that his love of the wicked act was so deeply inwrought and fixed in his nature, that he could not but indulge it, and must, therefore, be excused! How would a righteous judge treat such a shameless plea? Again; do you say, that the service of God is oppressive, or injurious to your interest? Never was there a more groundles cavil. He never was a hard Master. He requires nothing of us but what is as much adapted to promote our welfare as his own glory. All scripture and all experience demonstrate, that *his commandments are not grievous*; and that *his service*, instead of slavery, *is perfect freedom*,—the noblest freedom. Do you plead, that the provisions of the Gospel are not ex-

tensive and rich enough to reach your case? This objection is no less false than the foregoing. The blessed Redeemer is both able and willing to *save to the uttermost*, all that come to God through Him. To whatever embarrassments our philosophical speculations concerning the extent of the atonement may give rise, the plain language of Him who shed his blood for sinners, is, *Look unto me, and be ye saved*, ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH, *for I am God, and beside me there is none else.* And again, *Come unto me, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: for whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* And again, WHOSOEVER WILL, *let him come, and take of the water of life freely.* Do you allege that you have not time to attend to this great subject? Just as well might you allege a want of time to take the aliment necessary for sustaining your nature. Without the latter, indeed, your natural lives cannot be supported; but without the former better had you never been born; for your spirits must die eternally. O, for what was time given you? Can it be devoted to any object comparable to that of preparing for endless blessedness? Seeing, then, that you are *altogether without excuse;* seeing you have no reasonable plea for declining, or delaying to join the Lord's side, let me beseech you now to accept of his gracious invitation. *To-day, while it is called to-day, harden not your hearts:* for why should you attempt apologies now, when you know that in the great day of trial, you will be speechless?

6. The last reason which I shall urge, why we ought all to be *on the Lord's side*, is, that IT IS THE ONLY SAFE SIDE; THE ONLY SIDE THAT WILL FINALLY AND ASSUREDLY TRIUMPH. *His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion shall endure throughout all generations. He must reign until He shall have put all enemies under his feet.* Yes, my friends, the cause of God is the only one that shall live, and grow, and flourish, when all others have sunk under the arm of his Omnipotence. Every thing that is on the side of God, will last, will triumph, will eternally prosper: the perfections of his character, and the stability of his covenant, are pledged for this result. But inevitable downfall and destruction await every person, and every interest belonging to the side of his enemies. *Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. For the Lord shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

Our subject suggests a variety of practical reflections, to some of which we now request your serious attention. And,

1. We are led by the foregoing remarks to reflect, *How obvious and how strong the obligations on all to make a profession of religion!* By making a profession of religion, we mean, appearing and acting publickly *on the Lord's side.* It is, more particularly, attending with solemnity on those Sacramental Seals which Christ has instituted to mark the line between those who are within, and those who are without the visible Church. The duty of making this profession is obvious. If we are bound to BE *on the Lord's side*, we are surely bound to APPEAR on that side—to be SEEN to be there. Thus the same authority which requires us to believe in Christ, and to love *Christ*, has commanded us to *confess him before men*; and to let *our light*, as his followers, *shine before men.* Nay, he distinctly gives us to understand, that declining, or neglecting to *confess him before men*, is equivalent to *denying him*; and such he declares, *He will deny before his Father, and before the holy angels.* Nor let any imagine that this obligation to *confess Christ*, is not binding on them. Thousands appear to fall into this mistake. They say, and say truly, that to *confess the Saviour*, by making a public profession, while they have no faith in *him*, no love to him, would be to commit sin: but they appear to *have no serious* impression whatever, of the dreadful sin of NOT confessing Christ; in other words, of DENYING HIM before men. You are afraid, you say, of the sin of a hypocritical profession; but you are not afraid, it seems, of *turning your backs* upon the Lord of life and glory! O ye who are at ease in the commission of this sin, how great is your guilt! Be not deceived, God is not mocked.

2. How *solemn a transaction is making a profession of religion!* We are under the most solemn obligations, as you have heard, to make a profession—obligations which we can neither renounce nor disregard with impunity. To refuse to do it is to *deny the Saviour.* And yet, we are not at liberty to do it with rashness, with levity, or with an impenitent and unbelieving spirit. O how much does such a profession import! It implies coming forth from the camp of the enemy, and declaring ourselves *on the Lord's side.* It implies *joining ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten.* It is a deliberate, public enlisting under the banner of the Captain of salvation; taking, as it were, a solemn oath to be His, in soul and body, for time and eternity. Surely a transaction so serious, so momentous, so irrevocable; a transaction connected with so many important consequences to ourselves and others, is not a mere ceremonial, and ought not to be regarded or treated as such. It ought to be entered upon with intelligence, with solemn deliberation, with the sacred decision of one who remembers that he is *acting for eternity*, and that, after *putting his hand to the plough*, he can *never look back.*

3. *How deplorable the situation of those who are not on the Lord's side!* O that I could give to such persons if it were but one glance of their guilt and danger, as they really are! You are engaged, my friends, in a warfare with Omnipotence. Can you hope to prevail against Him? This is a hope which insanity itself cannot cherish. No; this hostility can end only in one of two ways. Either by your repenting, and abandoning the contest; or by your utter defeat and destruction. Which alternative will you prefer? Will you stand out, defy Jehovah, and brave the heaviest inflictions of his wrath? Surely you cannot deliberately resolve to take so infatuated a course. *Why will you die*, when life is so freely and mercifully offered you? The great Sovereign, against whom you have so unreasonably risen up in arms, is willing to be reconciled. He invites, he beseeches you to come in, and accept of a free pardon. Will you submit and live? You must be at peace with Him, or perish. If you ever intend to make peace with Him, for what are you waiting? Are you expecting *more easy terms* of reconciliation hereafter? Alas! my friends, Jehovah must change before you can be taken to heaven while you continue in love with sin, and enemies of his glorious character. Besides, what *can* be more condescending and gracious than the terms now offered you? You are not called upon to bring a price in your hands. Only lay down your arms, be sorry for what you have done, and become reconciled to the character, the government, and the Gospel of God; and all that is past will be pardoned, and remembered against you no more. Are you waiting for a *more convenient season*, to be reconciled? I ask, will continuing longer in your rebellion render it easier for you hereafter to repent and reform? As reasonably might a sick man say to one who offered at once to heal him—"Let me become a little worse; let my disease take a little firmer hold, and my weakness become a little greater, before you apply the remedy." But, ah, you act not thus in reference to the health of your bodies: it is only in regard to the interests of your immortal souls that you yield to such unspeakable infatuation. Do you ask, what you shall do? I answer, *Repent, and believe the Gospel.* Take not another step in your present unhallowed course. THIS HOUR lay down the weapons of your rebellion, and be reconciled to Him who alone can avail you as a Friend. I say, THIS HOUR, for you know not that you have another to live. *Now, then, in the day of your merciful visitation*, while the door is open, and the voice of mercy is heard in kindest accents,—enter without delay the sanctuary of salvation, which the Saviour has purchased and prepared by his most precious blood; and you will find peace—eternal peace: but turn away from it, and all will be dark, and miserable, and accursed for ever!

4. Finally; *How important is it that those who profess to be on the Lord's side, exhibit a life and conversation corresponding with their profession.* What would you think, my brethren, if an army raised by the government of your country, and an army formed by a band of traitors, were encamped in the neighbourhood of each other, and you should see many individuals of the former, while they held their heads high in professions of loyalty, frequently visiting the tented field of the rebels, skulking among their ranks, and, in short, by bowing, smiling, and every indication of cordial familiarity, making it difficult, and sometimes impossible, to ascertain to which army they belonged? would you not consider their fidelity extremely suspicious? Need I say, brethren, that there is an awful amount of this equivocal friendship in the visible church? O how many who profess to be *on the Lord's side*, render it most distressingly doubtful, by their daily conformity to the world, whether they really belong to Christ or Belial! Hence it is, that so many who claim to be disciples, go halting and comfortless in their christain profession; oppressed with doubts concerning their own state; strangers to the joyful assurance of hope; and operating as clogs and a burden, rather than helpers to the church. Surely it is time for such to arouse themselves, and to examine with more solicitude than ever ON WHAT SIDE THEY REALLY STAND. O ye who have subscribed with your hands unto the Lord, and have surnamed yourselves by the name of Israel, remember that the real children of God are *a peculiar people*: peculiar in their experience, their taste, their joys, their habits, and their pursuits. If you wish to have satisfying evidence that you are of their number, enter, with holy decision, into their scriptural peculiarities. If you wish to enjoy peace yourselves, to edify others, or to honour your Leader, be decided: *Follow the Lord fully.* Let your every word and action speak on what side you are: not by noisy profession; not by sanctimonious austerity; not by saying, in every company, *Stand by, for I am holier than thou;* but by humility, by benevolence, by purity, by self-denial, by a holy elevation of sentiment and affection, by an unaffected taste and zeal for spiritual things, by shunning the very appearance of evil; by abounding in those works of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God. And for your encouragement remember that precious word of promise, from the Captain of salvation, which belongs to every faithful believer—HE THAT CONFESSETH ME BEFORE MEN, HIM WILL I ALSO CONFESS BEFORE MY FATHER AND THE HOLY ANGELS. TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH, WILL I GRANT TO SIT WITH ME ON MY THRONE, EVEN AS I ALSO OVERCAME, AND AM SET DOWN WITH MY FATHER ON HIS THRONE.—Amen.

THE

NATIONAL PREACHER.

Go...Teach all nations.....*Mat.* xviii. 19.

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SERMON XIII.

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THE DUTY OF FAMILY WORSHIP.

II. Samuel vi. 20.—*Then David returned to bless his household.*

In the life of this great and good man, though we find much to lament, yet we find more to admire and love. Any one who delights to survey the developement of human worth, must be pleased to follow him in his gradual rise from the shepherd's staff to the sceptre of empire.

At the period to which the text refers, his many troubles were gone, and he was the acknowledged king over both Judah and Israel. The surrounding nations, who had long and too successfully invaded the land, had been subdued once and again; so that his name was feared and respected abroad, as well as loved and venerated by his own people.

But, in the height of his renown, David did not forget that he was a husband and a father. On the day alluded to in the text, having blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts, we see him, at the proper season, retiring from the midst of admiring thousands *to bless his household*—He offered up prayer, as a husband and a father, in the midst of his family. With this illustrious example before us, our present object will be, to recommend and enforce the duty of Family Worship.

Perhaps there are few subjects that need to be treated with more plainness and tenderness than this. For not only your own welfare, but the welfare of your children and children's children through many generations, may be considered as intimately connected with your attention to this duty.

Let me observe at the commencement, however, that when I urge the duty of worshipping God in the family, I do not mean, simply, asking a blessing from Him at meals. I should be grieved and surprised to know that any one before me needs exhortation on this point:—that any one who even occasionally comes into God's house, should live in such open and avowed forgetfulness of God, as to sit down several times daily, at the table of His bounty, without once acknowledging the hand that feeds every living thing. But, brethren, if you know of any such, to guard you against their example, consider that the word of God respecting them is, "Let their table become a snare before them; and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap." No: when I speak of the duty of worshipping

God in the family, I mean, *assembling them together, and as the first employment in the morning, and the last in the evening, unitedly reading a portion of God's word, and unitedly addressing His throne.* With this explanation, let me now invite your attention,

I. To THE OBLIGATIONS enjoining this service;

II. To THE ADVANTAGES resulting from it.

First; The OBLIGATIONS to family worship. There are certain duties of religion resulting so plainly from the relations we bear to each other, and to our Maker, that they are perhaps not made the subject of *express commandment.* But these duties are often among the most sober and essential parts of Christian obedience: and we find our warrant for them, and our obligation to them, in their manifest connexion with God's glory and our own welfare; in the richest promises of divine mercy; in the most fearful denunciations of divine wrath; and in Scripture examples, recorded with Heaven's approbation and praise. So is it with the duty of *Family Worship.* Of all associations, the first in importance, as well as first in time, is that of the family. In proportion as its relative duties are well discharged, Church and State are safe and prosperous. These duties never will be discharged without the instrumentality of household devotion. But by uniting in daily prayer, members of a family may be made to realize that they have a common Father and God, who is now their Witness, and will hereafter be their common Judge. Indeed so important has this been considered in every age, that the very Heathen themselves had their household Divinities—Gods, whom as families they worshipped, and to whom they daily looked for the blessings, which as families they needed. And if any parent living in a *Christian* land, and believing in the *true* God; and having children growing up around him, whom he has been *instrumental* in bringing into being, and whose being he *may* be instrumental in making a blessing or a curse to themselves and the world; if such a parent, I say, can habitually neglect the plain duty of leading his children in the worship of the one living and true God;—alas, the example is a most lamentable contrast to that of the Pagan, devoutly, though ignorantly, bowing with his family to an idol of wood or stone. Yes, brethren, the religion of nature, as well as the religion of the Bible, prompts to family worship. There is not a feeling which belongs to us as fathers, which does not plead for this duty: —There is not a relation which we sustain, either to children or servants, but it speaks out, and enjoins—let there be an altar to Heaven, at which the father and head of the family may minister, and call down blessings on those around him.

And while we find not only warrant, but arguments for this duty in every kind feeling of a father's heart, which even the darkness of paganism can not destroy; we at the same time find the Most High adverting to it in language that may well alarm such as have neglected the duty. Says the inspired Prophet, *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee*

not, and upon the families that call not on thy name; for they have eaten up Jacob and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.

If we advert to history, for examples, we find that in every age there have been wise and holy men, who have felt the importance of this duty, and acted accordingly.. Of Abraham we have as God's own testimony, "I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Of Moses, the head and lawgiver of Israel, it is said, "He was faithful in all his house as a servant, for the testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." Joshua declared his purpose, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." And Cornelius, the Roman centurion, was chosen toreceive the vision which issued in breaking down the wall of partition between God and the Gentile world, with this account of his character and family, "One that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway."

We might also advert to profane history, and mention the names of a Hale, a Walton, a Bacon, and others, famed afar for whatever is wise, and noble, and grand; and yet men who could daily find time to retire from the service of their country, and the allurements of philosophy, and to join with their families, morning and evening, in the humble worship of God. Of such statesmen I could say, as did Sheba's queen, of Solomon, "Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom." How pure and blissful the reign of happiness around them; for their dwellings are houses of prayer! But, not to anticipate ourselves, let us next consider,

II. THE BENEFITS RESULTING FROM THE OBSERVANCE OF THIS DUTY.

Among these I might name that *peace of mind* to the head of the family himself, which is the natural consequence of rightly discharging this duty. There is a weight of responsibility, which every reflecting husband, father, and master, will feel deeply, when he considers himself the first and nearest earthly guardian of those around him; and which must fill him with the consciousness, that the Divine guidance and blessing are daily needed by himself and them. Whether all or any of the children in whom his name and interests are to live, when he is gone, are to fall into wretchedness and disgrace, or to rise to happiness and honour, depends on Heaven's guidance. Whether all or any of them are to be swept into an untimely grave, depends on Heaven's care. God alone sees the end from the beginning; and is able to avert every impending evil from them, and to turn them from every sin. . And what parent has devoted his children to God, and daily united in commending his family to Heaven's guidance and care, without feeling a peace of heart to spring from the duty, to which the unworshipping father must be a stranger? Wherever business may call you, when you think of *home*, and of the dear immortals that dwell there, is it not an anchor of the soul, to be enabled to reflect, that on the morning when you left them, you committed them to the care of Him. whose eye is

in every place, and whose ear is open to every prayer? Or should you leave them unblessed by devotion, and should sudden death or calamity come in among them; would there be no keen anguish added to the smart of Heaven's stroke, when you should reflect that you had not even asked for Heaven's protection? But the benefits of discharging this duty are not confined to the head of the family; they are calculated to affect the head and the members equally.

Family worship *promotes the great end of religious instruction.* A portion, though it be small, of God's word, read every day in the hearing of a family, will soon make them, in some measure, acquainted with the contents of the Bible. It is by doing a little, and doing it frequently, with seriousness, that our best acquirements are gained. And we may add, that this mode of gaining or giving religious knowledge, although in small portions, yet at frequent intervals, has the advantage of enabling us, if we will, to practice what we hear, and as we hear it. But further—

The discharge of this duty is one most effectual means of *promoting domestic union and peace.* Every family is happy and prosperous about in proportion as each member is disposed to study and act for the good of the whole. But, in almost every household, there are eyes that do not see, and hearts that do not feel alike: and even when wisdom and regularity have done their utmost, there are often little untoward events between parents and children, between masters and servants, that may mar the happiness of all, if they are not wisely controlled, by a spirit of mutual good-will and forbearance. And by no other means can this spirit of union and kindness be so effectually secured as by due attendance on the family altar. Under the influence of the holy flame which burns upon it, the heart has often been softened into a forgetfulness of those little irritations, that, if allowed to remain, would ripen into explosions, separating not only servant from master, and master from servant, but perhaps brother from brother, and parent from child. How must confidence in a parent or master—how must readiness to submit to his will and authority be produced and strengthened in a child or servant, when permitted to bow down with him and unite in supplicating mercies from one common Father and Master in heaven: and how must his heart be guarded against every disposition to oppression, or unkindness when he kneels, and acknowledges their common transgressions before God, and entreats a common forgiveness. It is impossible but that union and peace should be the result of such oft-repeated scenes; and he that will seek thus to consecrate his dwelling, as a temple of peace, will find it so; for *the God of peace will be with him.*

Family worship is also a grand means of *the growth of religion in the heart, and in the Church at large.* It is not so extensively true, that families are what the Church makes them, as that both Church and State are what families make them. Magistrates and ministers of religion were once children in a family; and what they are to be as magistrates and ministers, is often to be determined from what they have gathered from the parent to whose examples and precepts they may have at first looked. It is a most fatal mistake to imagine that the ordinances of the public sanctuary are

enough of themselves to train up children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The parent who is thus training them, will be sure to bring them to the sanctuary, that they may enjoy its ordinances.—But the seed lodged in the tender heart by the ministry of the sanctuary, must be watered and nurtured at home, or it will die; and what can water it so effectually as the father's prayers, offered up for all, in their immediate presence?

Religion is so essentially social in its nature, that if we are debarred, during the whole week, from those ordinances, in which heart may kindle heart, we experience a restlessness, and a decay, which the closet can not of itself remedy. Now it is between the devotions of the closet, and the public worship of the sanctuary, that God has ordained the worship of the family—in which all the ties of nature may unite to strengthen the principles of grace; and thus new strength be added daily to our love to God and to each other. And when I contemplate the spectacle of the master and the servant, the parent and the child, and perhaps too the aged grand-parent and the little prattlers, all bending reverently before the God of heaven to seek His favour; and when I know that this scene is repeated every morning before they scatter to the business of the day, and every evening before they retire to rest,—methinks there is something so holy and heavenly in all this, that it must exert a sanctifying influence on old and young who dwell in the happy family. Such a dwelling has in it the ark of the covenant: and *The Lord will bless it and all that pertain to it, because of the ark of the Lord.* The name of God is honoured there, and His blessing will there descend—a blessing on their basket and their store; a blessing on their bodies and their souls; and it shall last from generation to generation. They have the promise, "Our sons shall be as plants grown up in their youth; our daughters as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace." Such an house stands near to Heaven: On its lintel and the posts of its doors, is the sprinkled blood of the slain lamb; and when angels of wrath are abroad in the land, they see the life-ensuring signal, and they pass by. Angels of light encompass that dwelling, when the darkness of night has covered it: and by night and by day, He who is the angels' Lord and our Brother is there, "the Watchful Shepherd that never slumbers nor sleeps." O that, for our city's sake, our Church's sake, our souls' sake, our children's sake, such a home might henceforth be the dwelling of every one here!

And now, brethren, we affectionately ask, why is this duty not faithfully performed by you all? What is your objection?—what your excuse?

I know I speak to some, who have found the worship of God in their families to be one of their most delightful employments; and who are no strangers to the benefits arising from it. But probably there are others present whose families have never been thus blessed. To such fathers and heads of families I would now make my appeal, and ask, *why is it so? what is your excuse?*

One very common plea is, *the want of ability, suitably and comfortably to discharge the duty.* To this I would reply, that every thing must have a beginning; and if we never attempt any thing, until we feel adequate to

do it well, life from beginning to end would be one unbroken scene of idleness. We never know what we can do, till we try—and especially in duties of religion. The great fault generally is, that we do not venture far enough. In every duty to which God's authority invites us, we have God's promise, that He himself will be our Helper, and will carry us through. And when His providence places you at the head of a family, and his authority calls you to worship Him in the midst of it; venture, trusting His promise to pour out upon you the spirit of grace and supplication; and your heart will be enlarged, and your mouth opened, as sure as there is power and grace in heaven. But, '*we can not trust.*' Ah! this is the secret of all the worst failings that ever overtake the Christian from the beginning to the end of his course on earth. And as I know some do feel this want of ability deeply and painfully, let me suggest to them a remedy, or means of help.

I am opposed to the use of forms in prayer when the individual can with comfort and enlargement address his Maker without them. But I am altogether in favour of using them, rather than that the individual should either not pray at all, or pray with such embarrassment and feebleness, as both to destroy his own comfort, and the edification and profit of those around him. Now you all know there are some excellent forms of prayer, prepared by holy men, adapted also for use in families. These, I would say, it is the duty of every one to use, who can not conduct family *devotion profitably* without them. And he who will begin in this way, and will aim to gain strength, by using the proper diligence to store his mind with divine promises and petitions, from God's word, will generally find himself, after a time, able to lay aside this aid, and to fulfil the duty, not only to his own joy, but to his own surprise. Most generally, the full heart will ultimately make the fluent tongue. But should a form, from whatever cause, be necessary to the last, let it be used to the last:—for "it is accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which he hath not."—And, granting this aid to all who need it, is there a father before me, who can any longer plead the want of ability to worship God in his *family*, as an excuse for omitting the duty? Oh, how many have spent hours in reading to their families from the light publications of the day; who yet shrink from even reading a prayer in their presence!

By others *the want of time is urged.*—Their families are large—their business presses them—it is of such a nature that they can not control their hours. Thus they plead that they have not time for a duty, which they confess to be all-important. On this point permit me to remark, that good people do sometimes err, in spending more time in the performance of this service than is wise or dutiful. We may be so long, as to become tedious in our prayers; and whenever this is the case, it creates a weariness, especially in the minds of the young, that is too apt to end in disgust or aversion. But when we urge the duty of allowing no day, in ordinary circumstances, to pass by, without, as a family, spending ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes, in the solemn worship of our Maker; and when the objection made against it, is *the want of time*, we ask, Can men be serious, when they say so? It is not a little remarkable, that the illustrious men, whose names are on record

as most faithful in this duty, were occupied with callings, which might seem to furnish the best excuses for omitting it. Moses, bearing all the concerns of Israel's host, on their march from Egypt, yet found time to be "*faithful in all his house.*"—Joshua, a warrior, and, under his banner, leading Israel to the conquest of nation after nation, yet declares his purpose, "*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*"—Or shall I name one of later day? A greater ornament of the bench; or a more laborious servant of his country, never sat as Judge, than was Sir Matthew Hale. And yet his family worship, morning and evening, was as regular as the rising and setting of the sun. And with the example of such men before us, who sustained the most important interests of States and nations,—shall we, whose duties scarce carry us beyond the immediate concerns of our own persons and families,—shall we say we have no time to worship God in our houses? Brethren, we shall never have time for any thing unless we choose to take it; and we all could find time for this duty, if we had correct views of its importance, and were really desirous of peforming it. For, think but a moment of your plea. No time! Brethren, I ask in God's holy name, what becomes of your time? Spend all that your opportunities will allow you to spend in the pursuit of the world, and gather up its very fragments which you now throw to the winds, and you will have the time I ask for the worship of your Maker.—Save what you now spend in frivolous conversation, or in conversation worse than frivolous,—save what you now spend in unwise and intemperate reproof of your families; and spend that time, and that breath in praying for them and with them; and the sacred duty will be uniformly discharged.

Perhaps, I may be told by some, that they have a different hinderance—they feel the ability and they would make the trial; but *they are opposed in their own families; and to enforce attendance would create a discord, that might defeat the great object of the duty itself.* To this I reply, we do not know that it would create such discord, until we have tried it, and the duty is fairly introduced. And are we to omit the performance of a positive and important duty, because of an apprehended evil, the following of which is at most uncertain, and rather improbable; and at the worst far from a natural result of the duty itself? But, apart from this, God has made you the head of your family; and you are responsible to Him, for the rule of that family, in His fear. At the worst of peradventures then, you are bound to do your duty;—you are not to resign your rule, because some child of disobedience chooses to dispute it. And if in any thing, you would resolutely maintain it, you should do so in serving God. And even should opposition be ever so fixed; be you determined and persevering; and you will see that the most stout-hearted shall find that the arm of the Almighty is above them.

But in this I am supposing and granting one of the greatest of extremes. No—I cannot believe, that there is before me one father, who is cursed with children, so lost to every thing kind in the feelings of nature, so estranged from, and hostile to every thing good and pure in the worship of the true God—so fixed in the seat of the scorner—as either rudely, or obstinately to oppose the wishes of a parent to pray with and for them; to bring down

from Heaven upon them, the blessings that may enrich them through life, and in eternity. Rather let me hope better things of the young around me; and believe that they would feel the faithful performance of this duty, as a new claim upon them for filial obedience and gratitude.

And now let me for a moment entreat the young, who are yet under a parent's roof, where the family prayer is heard in its season, to reflect on the mercies that surround them, and the claims which lie upon them. Let no hour, no employment of your lives be accounted more precious than when you bend at the family altar. Come to it cheerfully and solemnly. Let no temptation of evening or morning make your place empty, when the holy offering is to be made. Be you there to add your coal to the flame, and have your share in the incense which goes up before God. Let the prayers of your parents, put up for you, be embalmed in your memory. They will be a cordial to your spirit, in the sad day when you shall turn away from their fresh grave, and think what a father and mother you have buried. And they will be a treasure and a defence to you through life; for, answered they will be, when God shall see most fit. Oh! of all the patrimonies that we should most desire, to make us happy here and hereafter—honoured among men, and beloved in heaven; it is the ardent and frequent prayer of a sainted father or mother, who, in childhood and youth, has led us to Heaven's mercy-seat, and there implored for us, and with us, Heaven's favour as our portion.

Parents and Heads of families, let me entreat you not only to perform this duty, but also to consider *how* you perform it. Let it be done in such a way, and with such a spirit, as will show that you value it. When you undertake it, let your worldly cares and concerns be so adjusted, your dwelling be so silent and peaceful, that but one sound shall be heard in it—the *sound of true devotion*. Let there be no temptations left to distract yourself, or others:—show by your earnestness and devotedness, that your heart is in your work—that you feel yourself and your family to be before God, waiting for his hearing and his blessing. And when your worship is thus presented, see that your conduct throughout the day corresponds with it. Beware that no unholy deed or word should destroy the heavenly influence, which your devotion may have spread around you; and thus make your very duties rather a stumbling-block and a reproach to religion, than its aid and ornament.

Is there before me, the Head of a family who is yet young? let me entreat him to begin this duty *now*. The longer you defer it, the more are you in danger of never beginning; for the more will difficulties multiply. Or is there before me the Head of a family, who is in mature years, or old age, and whose house is not yet a house of prayer? let me say affectionately to such, you have not a moment to lose. *Begin this night*. Should your first attempt be no more than reading a portion of God's word, and bowing with your family merely to ask God's protection till the morning; *begin this night*. For to-morrow and to-morrow's night are not yours. To-morrow's dawn may find you in eternity, or on eternity's dread brink!

SERMON XIV.

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THE UNION OF BELIEVERS WITH CHRIST.

JOHN XV. 5.—*I am the Vine, ye are the Branches.*

THESE words plainly express the fact, that humble believers are united to the Lord Jesus Christ. They were spoken by him to his disciples; and, through them, to his faithful followers in every subsequent age. To Him all true Christians are inseparably united. And, from this union, they derive their spiritual life, their growth in grace, their Christian character, and their title to all the blessings of the new covenant. My present object will be,

TO ILLUSTRATE THIS UNION OF BELIEVERS WITH CHRIST.

That our sentiments on this interesting subject may not be misapprehended, it may be proper to remark, that it is neither a union of essence, nor of person.

It is not a union of essence.

Of this character is the union of the three persons in the Godhead. The Scriptures teach us, that "there are Three that bear record in heaven,—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are One." The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are, in one sense, three: and yet "these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory." Mysterious and incomprehensible as this doctrine of the Trinity is, we are bound to receive it, because it is plainly and frequently taught in the Holy Scriptures.

Such can not be the union of Christ with his followers. This would exalt Christians to a state of equality with the infinite Saviour, and clothe them with the attributes of God: an idea too absurd—too blasphemous—to be indulged for a single moment.

It is not a union of person.

Of this character is the union of Divine and human nature in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is God, possessing the Divine nature, with all its distinguishing and incommunicable attributes. He is Man, possessing a human body and soul. These two natures constitute in him one person. He is, and will continue to be, "God and man in two distinct natures and one person for ever."

The union of believers with Christ is not of this kind. That would entirely and for ever destroy the individuality of Christians. It would make but one person of Christ and all his disciples among all nations and in all ages of the world. The absurdity of such a doctrine appears at the first glance. Merely to state it, is to refute it. The union of believers with Christ, then, is neither an essential nor a personal union.

Having made these remarks to prevent misapprehension, I would now proceed, in a plain Scriptural manner, to illustrate the real nature of this union.

1. In the text and context, the union of believers with Christ is compared to the union of the *branches with the vine*. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me, ye can do nothing." "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." As the branches are united to the vine, and in consequence of that union, receive vegetable life and nourishment; so Christians are united to the Lord Jesus Christ, in such a manner as to receive from him spiritual life and heavenly nourishment. He is the vine—the source, whence they obtain the sanctifying influences of Divine grace. By these influences they are enabled to bring forth the fruits of holiness in their life and conversation. In order to abound in the fruits of holiness, they must abide in Christ—they must live near to him; feel their unceasing dependence upon him; confide in his merits; and daily and devoutly implore new communications of his Spirit. As well may they expect fruit from the branches, when separated from the vine, as look for increase of grace in their own hearts, while departing from Christ. *If they do not* abide in him, they are like dead branches which can produce no fruit; and which are fit only to be gathered into bundles, and cast into the fire. But if they abide in Christ, they are like living and vigorous branches, and will be enabled to "bring forth much fruit."

2. In the Scriptures the union of believers with Christ is compared to the union of the various parts of *an edifice with the foundation* on which they securely rest.

"Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief-corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." As the different parts of a building are connected with each other, and all depend on the foundation for support and strength; so the different members of the Church are connected with each other, and all depend on Christ for spiritual strength. Resting on him as their firm foundation, they constitute a spiritual house, an habitation of God by his Spirit. "Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

3. The union of believers with Christ is compared to the union of the *human body with the head.*

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ; who is head over all things to the Church, which is his body." "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of

his bones." As the various members of the human body are united to the head—are under its influence—and partake of the same sustenance: so true believers are united to Christ as their head; are under the influence of his Spirit; are supported by rich communications of his grace; and are members of his mystical body.

4. This union is compared to that, which, by the marriage covenant, is constituted between *husband and wife.*

"The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh:—this is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." As the wife is, by the marriage covenant, united to her husband; as, in some respects, "they are no more two, but one flesh;" as they are interested in each other's affections, in each other's property, and in each other's reputation: so true believers, by the covenant of grace, are made one with Christ, the spiritual Bridegroom of the Church. By this union they become interested in his affections, in his glory, and in all the blessings of his kingdom.

5. The union of believers with Christ comprises *similarity of dispositions.*

The "same mind" is in Christians "which was in Christ Jesus." "With open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Paul said to the Romans, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." And again, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If the same mind must be in us, that was in Christ Jesus; if we must behold the glory of the Lord, and be changed into his image from glory to glory, by the sanctifying influences of his Holy Spirit, in order to be Christians; if the spirit of Christ must dwell in us, and we must possess the same temper of love to God, and benevolence to men, which he possessed, or be none of his; then true Christians are united to Christ by similarity of disposition.

In Christ, *holiness* is the great principle of moral action. So is it, also, in Christians. This is evinced by the precious fruits of holiness which are visible in their conversation and conduct. To abandon the love and practice of sin; to exercise evangelical repentance; to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and to render sincere and persevering obedience to the commandments of God; are, evidently, effects of holiness. For "the carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Sinners can not be brought to the exercise of genuine repentance for sin, living faith in Christ, and cordial

obedience to the commands of God, without holiness in their hearts. Their hearts must be renewed and made holy, or they will remain impenitent, unbelieving, and disobedient. Hence Christ said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." And Paul taught, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, that, "without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." Christians, then, are "born again." They are regenerated by the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost. They are made holy in heart and life. Their holiness is perfectly similar in its nature, though vastly inferior in degree, to the holiness of Christ. Being conformed to the moral image of Christ; being holy, in some measure, as he is holy; and having his Spirit dwelling in them; they are actuated by the same principles, and, of course, are united to him in the disposition of their hearts.

6. The union of believers with Christ implies a *fraternal relation*. Christians are united to Christ by adoption of the Father.

By an act of God's free and sovereign grace, he has adopted all penitent and believing sinners into his own family. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then *heirs*: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer *with him*, that we may be also glorified together." "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts." "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God." "As many as received Christ, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." In these passages of Scripture we are clearly taught that Christians are God's adopted children. He is their Father, and Christ is their Brother. In consequence of their adoption, Christ calls them his brethren. "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God." "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Christ and all true believers constitute but one family. Jehovah is their common God and Father. United to Christ by adoption, all real Christians will share with him in the glorious inheritance which God has provided for them in heaven—"an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

7. This union with Christ includes *sameness of interests*.

Christ and believers have one and the same cause at heart. The manifestation of God's glory, and the salvation of perishing sinners, were the great objects which induced the Son of God to come down from heaven, and to take into union with himself the nature of man. These were the objects which he constantly sought during his residence on the earth. These are now the principal objects of his pursuit, while, enthroned in glory, he is

acting as the Advocate and Intercessor of his people. And these very objects are sought, with supreme solicitude, by all the humble and faithful disciples of Christ. They can not be true Christians who have not supreme regard to the glory of God; and to whom the salvation of sinners, and the interests of Christ's spiritual kingdom are not peculiarly precious. These sublime objects are exceedingly precious in the estimation of all consistent Christians. With fervent zeal, and with holy and increasing delight, they labour to advance the Redeemer's kingdom—to save guilty and perishing men—and to extend Jehovah's glory. They love to exalt, and praise, and magnify the Lord their God, and to "worship at his footstool." As in heaven, among angels, and "the spirits of just men made perfect"—so among devout Christians on earth, there is joy over sinners who repent, and turn to God, and "do works meet for repentance." With "joy unspeakable and full of glory," they exult in the prosperity of Zion. Their purest and highest happiness is like the happiness of Christ. Their best friends are the friends of Christ. They have the same enemies to encounter which Christ is successfully opposing. His interests and theirs, in every important respect, are the same. And, by these interests, he and they will for ever remain inseparably united.

8. The union of believers with Christ is produced *by mutual and solemn covenant stipulations.*

It is proposed, by Christ, to sinners, in the precious invitations of the Gospel—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." "Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." "My oxen and my fatlings are killed; all things are ready; come unto the marriage." "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." In these invitations we are assured that the price of our redemption is paid; that Divine Justice is satisfied; and that a door is opened for the free and full exercise of mercy to all repenting and believing sinners. Here Christ makes a kind and gracious offer of himself, and of all the blessings of heaven, to sinners of every description. He promises that all who will repent of their sins, embrace him in the arms of faith and love, and render holy obedience to the Law and the Gospel, shall receive pardon, and sanctification, and eternal life.

When sinners cordially submit to this plan of salvation—when they abandon their iniquities, and exercise "repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," they accept and confirm the offered covenant. In this covenant, thus confirmed, they are united to Christ, interested in his merits, and entitled to all the benefits of his mediation.

The union of believers with Christ, which is produced by these covenant transactions, is the basis of their title to the blessings of salvation. The

merits of Christ constitute the foundation of their acceptance with God. And they become interested in his merits by the "faith that worketh by love, purifieth the heart, and overcometh the world"—the faith by which they accept of his covenant. All true believers, therefore, are united to Christ in the covenant of grace, and are personally interested in the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the Gospel. Hence "God can be just and yet the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

It appears then, that the union of real Christians with Christ resembles, in some respects, the union of the branches with the vine—of the various parts of an edifice with the foundation—of the different members of the human body with the head—and of the wife with her husband: and that all real Christians are inseparably united to Christ, by the holy disposition of their hearts; by the spirit of adoption; by similarity of interests; and by mutual covenant engagements.

From these considerations we are led to reflect,

1. How great is the benevolence and condescension of God, as exhibited in the plan of redemption by Jesus Christ.

Guilty and hell-deserving as we are, he offers to us the pardon of our sins, and the salvation of our souls. He proposes to us an everlasting covenant of grace: a covenant by which all penitent and believing sinners are admitted to the most endearing and honourable relation to Christ, and, through him, to the infinite Jehovah.

Should a child of infamy and wretchedness be adopted into a family of affluence and reputation, and be treated with the tenderness of an heir, all men would applaud the disinterested condescension of the benefactor. This, however, would be but a very faint representation of Jehovah's condescension, in admitting any of the human race into union with his beloved Son. In the supposed case, it would be only the condescension of one creature to another. But in the gracious act of God to believers, there is the condescension of the Infinite Creator to guilty creatures. By an act of free and sovereign grace, he condescends to receive them into his own family, to call them his children, and to treat them as heirs of his throne and kingdom. He exalts them to a covenant-union with his own Son—the King of glory—the Saviour of Israel.

2. From this subject we may be assisted in deciding the momentous question, whether we are indeed Christians.

We are not Christians unless we are inseparably united to the Lord Jesus Christ. And if we are truly united to Christ, we possess and exercise the same holy dispositions of heart, which he exhibited while dwelling among men: we have the Spirit of adoption; we are pursuing the same interests which he sought; we have abandoned the love and the practice of sin; we have fled, for refuge, from the condemning sentence of Divine Law, to the hope which is set before us in the Gospel; we have accepted of the covenant of grace, and solemnly and sincerely given away ourselves to Christ, as everlasting trophies of his redeeming love. If we are truly united to Christ, we possess and exercise that living faith in him, which includes, not only the assent of the understanding, but, also, a warm and hearty approbation of

his mediatorial character, and a full reliance on his merits for acceptance with God. If we are inseparably united to Christ, we have something of that heavenly temper of the Lamb, which he so eminently displayed while in this "vale of tears;" we are daily imitating his zeal for the glory of his Father, his kindness and compassion towards men, his humility and meekness, his patience and resignation: And the great and glorious objects which he so zealously pursued while here below; and to which he is still devoted in the Heaven of heavens, will ever call forth our most vigorous and persevering exertions. Carefully examine your own hearts, then, dear brethren, and rest not contented, for a single moment, until you have clear and decisive evidence, that you are united to Christ in that "everlasting covenant" which is "well-ordered in all things and sure."

3. How exceedingly important is it that Christians should walk worthy of their relation to Christ.

It is well known that the conduct of our earthly relatives produces no inconsiderable effect on our reputation. If they conduct well, we share in the honour which they justly acquire. But if their conduct be vicious and infamous, we suffer by the dishonour they bring upon themselves. And the more nearly related they are to us, the more tenderly do we feel the wound which their dishonour inflicts.

So, when as Christians we maintain a near and humble walk with God; when we faithfully and habitually practise the holy religion which we profess; when we exhibit, in our daily conduct and conversation, the virtues which so eminently distinguished the life of our exalted Redeemer: then we reflect honour on Christ and his cause—we adorn the doctrines of the gospel—we produce living testimony to the superlative excellence of the Christian religion. But when we contradict our profession, by unhallowed practice; when we are luke-warm, and careless, and inattentive to the duties of practical piety; when we yield to "covetousness, which is idolatry," and are manifestly more anxious to enjoy the riches, pleasures, and honours of this world, than to secure an inheritance among saints and angels in glory; when our lives are unholy, irreverent, prayerless, or immoral: then Christ is deeply "wounded in the house of his friends;" his laws are violated; his holy religion is dishonoured; and sinners are hardened, and plunged deeper in impenitence and unbelief.

Since, then, the visible glory of Christ, and of his cause, depends so much on the conduct of his professed friends, and since we are admitted to such intimate and honourable union with him; surely we should exhibit the fruits of holiness in our life and conversation. We should remember that we are closely allied to a Being whose honour is infinitely sacred; and that we have espoused the most important cause which ever called for the enterprise and exertion of intelligent creatures. For the honour of our Divine Master, then, as well as for the sake of our own precious souls, and the souls of those around us, we should live in the daily and faithful practice of every Christian duty. We should resolutely surmount every barrier in our way to glory. We should "run, with patience, the race which is set before us." We should "give all diligence to make our calling and election sure."

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before," we should "press," with holy and increasing ardour, "towards the mark for the prize of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Finally; Let none forget, that union with the Lord Jesus Christ is of unspeakable importance to all men.

It is absolutely essential to salvation. They, who are not united to Christ, have no interest in his atonement. They are yet under the condemning sentence of the Divine Law. In a spiritual sense, they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." They are "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise; having no hope, and without God in the world." They are "dead in trespasses and sins." This is the deplorable condition of each one in this assembly who is not united to Christ. Let me, affectionately, but faithfully, warn you of your danger. While your affections centre in the pleasures of sin, the riches of this world, or the honour which cometh from man; and while you slight the honour and happiness of a covenant union with Christ, you incessantly expose yourself to the wrath of Heaven!

Christ is now offering you pardon and justification and eternal salvation. He is disclosing the terms on which reconciliation with God may be obtained. He is mercifully waiting for you to accept of those terms, and to receive his rich and sovereign grace. By his own tremendous death he has made atonement for your sins. By the agony of his cross; by his resurrection from the dead; by his ascension to glory; by all the horrours of perdition, and all the glories of Heaven, he now beseeches you to accept of his covenant, and be reconciled to God. If you accept the offered grace, and faithfully consecrate your life to his service, he will receive you to Heaven, "that where he is, there you may be also." He will crown you with "glory and honour." You shall dwell "where is fulness of joy." But if you reject Christ and his great salvation, you must, inevitably, "be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." For God is not a man that he should lie! And O, remember, too, that these benevolent interpositions of the Holy Trinity, if thus rejected, must for ever *aggravate* your ruin;—must become "*a savour of death unto death.*"

Be persuaded, then, to view, with deep concern, your guilt and danger. Forsake the hard "way of transgressors," without a moment's delay. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation." "To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." To-day abandon sin and the powers of darkness: humble yourselves before God; and, by the vigorous exercise of evangelical faith, cordially receive Christ as your Prophet, Priest, and King; and thus ratify, in your own souls, that everlasting covenant which he has *sealed with blood.* So shall you be ever-blooming and ever-fruitful branches *of the Tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.* AMEN.

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Go—Teach all Nations.—Matt. xxviii. 19.

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SERMON X.

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LONG-MEADOW, MASS.

THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

Acts ii. 1.—*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.* . . . . . .

The Pentecost was an annual religious festival of the Jews, designed to commemorate the promulgation of the law from Mount Sinai. It was instituted fifty days after Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage:—a circumstance from which it seems to have derived its name. And it is worthy of notice, that the Pentecost alluded to in the text, was on the Sabbath—fifty days from the resurrection of Christ.

Perhaps few pages of the sacred history can afford the believer either more satisfaction or profit, than the one which exhibits the events of that memorable day.

After glancing at those events, we shall be prepared to contemplate some of the important instruction they afford.

The hundred and twenty disciples were assembled, for prayer and religious conference. And the twelve were doubtless expecting a speedy fulfilment of their Lord's promise,—*that they should be endued with power from on high.* Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, which rested upon each of them. Immediately they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak in languages with which they had previously been unacquainted. These facts being published through Jerusalem, drew around them crowds of astonished hearers. In this multitude were men from at least sixteen different countries or provinces, and of as many different languages or dialects. The disci-

ples addressed the whole, in their varied tongues, on the great subject of salvation.

Some seem to have been satisfied as to the *reality* of the miracle, and yet in doubt as to the *design* of it. And they said one to another; *What meaneth this?* Others, in a spirit of stubborn unbelief and of malice, ridiculed the whole, and pronounced the disciples intoxicated.

But the disciples were not to be silenced by ridicule. In God they felt strong. Peter standing up with the eleven, addressed the multitude with calmness, with plainness, and power. He showed, that the events they now witnessed were in perfect accordance with prophecy; were in fact an exact fulfilment of a prediction of the prophet Joel. He then proceeded to charge upon them the crime of murdering the Son of God; and to bear public testimony to His resurrection, and His exaltation to the right hand of God's throne. *Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. This Jesus hath God raised up; whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*

This plain and bold address, carried to the conscience and heart by an omnipotent Spirit, was overwhelming. The voice of derision was hushed. And on every side broke forth the momentous inquiry, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Taught by the Holy Ghost, the apostle urged at once the duty of repentance; and encouraged even the chief of sinners to hope for forgiveness, by a reference to the gracious promises of God. The result was that on that day, three thousand were added to the disciples of the Lord Jesus.

Such was the day of Pentecost; such the triumphant entrance of apostles on the great work of evangelizing the world. We are now,

TO CONTEMPLATE SOME OF THE IMPORTANT INSTRUCTION, WHICH THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THAT OCCASION AFFORD.

1. In the occurrences of the day of Pentecost, we discover evidence of A SPECIAL DIVINE INFLUENCE.

The idea is too prevalent, that the agency of the Supreme is only of a general character. It is denied, that he imparts any important influence at one time more than at another. It is supposed, in a word, that the re-

pentance and salvation of sinners are brought about, independently of any *direct* agency on the part of God.

Such views are manifestly at variance with the general testimony of the Bible, and very pointedly discountenanced by the page before us. Through the whole chain of events here detailed, we perceive clear evidence of God's *special* agency. Such evidence is furnished by the fact, that the apostles were instantaneously endued with extraordinary gifts of speech. They spake with other tongues, *as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Most convincing evidence of a special divine influence is found, also, in the *effects* produced upon the day of Pentecost. Prejudices the most violent were overcome. Hostility to the Christian faith the most rancorous was allayed. An important revolution was effected in the character and conduct of three thousand. And the only visible means of producing those astonishing effects, was the plain preaching of the apostles. Independently of divine aid, they spake, too, under very peculiar disadvantages. They had none of the accomplishments of learning, and none of the influence of wealth and rank. They were regarded as a company of unenlightened and deluded adherents to a system of religious heresy. By many they were pitied. By more they were despised. The violence of malignant feeling, which led to the crucifixion of their Lord, had not yet subsided; and they also were in danger of a similar martyrdom. At the same time they inculcated a religion directly at variance with the natural disposition and established prejudices of their hearers.

Contemplating, therefore, the effects produced under such circumstances, we can rationally account for them, only by admitting that the special agency of God was concerned. And those effects, corroborated as they have since been by the experience of millions turned from darkness to light, furnish invincible proof, that there is a secret divine influence sometimes diffused over the soul of man, which gives to the Gospel of truth a convincing and transforming power. An influence it is, with which stands connected the salvation of the rebellious. And it is imparted or withheld according to the sovereign pleasure of Him who governs in the heavens.

2. The occurrences of the day of Pentecost confirmed THE DIVINE MISSION OF JESUS, and THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

Whilst on earth, the Lord Jesus gave abundant evidence that he was from God. His numerous and well-attested *miracles* were so many unanswerable proofs, that he actually possessed the high character which

he claimed. The *resurrection* of Jesus gave new and still stronger testimony to the divinity of his mission, and the truth of his doctrine.

The unbelieving Jews seemed to regard the event of Christ's *death*, as sufficient evidence that he was an *impostor*. *If thou* BE *the Son of God*, said they, with mingled feelings of incredulity and contempt, *come down from the cross. He saved others, himself he can not save. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him.* And though the fact of his resurrection, according to his own prediction, was established by the clearest testimony, still the leading Jews must pretend, that deception had been practised. They persuaded the *multitude*, that the disciples came by night and stole him away. It remained for the events of another day, to give testimony to his divine mission, the force of which enmity itself could not resist. Those events were the occurrences of the day of Pentecost. They were an exact and obvious fulfilment of a prediction, or promise, of the Saviour. He encouraged his disciples to expect, that they would be *endued with special power from on high.* They *were* thus endued. Of the fact there was such proof as to convince assembled thousands; and among them the very murderers of their Lord.

If Jesus were an impostor, whence so wonderful a coincidence betwixt his promise and events which took place after his ascension to heaven. We have seen, too, that the peculiar powers possessed by the disciples, and the effects they produced, can be rationally ascribed to nothing short of the special agency of God. And will Jehovah lend his special aid for the support of an impostor, and the propagation of falsehood?

Tell us not, then, that this Jesus, whom we preach, and follow, and trust for immortal life, was a blasphemous pretender, when he *thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* The record of his miracles, the event of his resurrection, and the signal fulfilment of his last promises of love, all demonstrate, that he actually possessed that Divine dignity which he claimed. Tell us not, that the Christian system is a base fabrication. The very marked interference of God for its defence on the day of Pentecost assures us, that it is from Himself, and is true. And with such evidence of its divine origin, we will listen to its instructions; we will place entire confidence in its promises; we will cherish its thrilling hopes, as our blessed portion for Eternity.

3. The occurrences of the day of Pentecost exhibit THE FOLLY OF OPPOSITION TO THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

We say nothing now concerning the *guilt* of those, who array their talents, learning, influence, and possessions against the cause of God's

Anointed. We say nothing of the *woes*, which will accumulate along the path of their future existence. We see stamped on such opposition a character of *folly*, as well as of crime and peril.

Had the success of the Christian cause, in its commencement, been dependent on the few and feeble disciples of our Lord, its foes might justly have hoped at once to crush it. And were its future success, amid a world in rebellion, dependent exclusively on the resources of either men or angels, we might well despair of its universal triumph, and even indulge the most trembling anticipation. But the cause is supported, and moved on, by an arm of *everlasting strength*.

The day of Pentecost assures us, that Jehovah regards the kingdom of his Son with supreme affection; and that all his perfections are engaged for its defence and enlargement. If otherwise, why at the period of its peculiar trial, did he not abandon it? Why did he grant to its supporters the gift of tongues? Why impart to their ministrations such a resistless energy? The language of this favour to the infant church is too plain to be misunderstood. It gave to her a pledge of unchanging friendship: so that she has nothing to fear from the malice or the power of millions leagued against her. *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.*

But if such friendship and power be pledged for Christ's kingdom; we must say, that man never assumes an attitude of greater folly, than when he sets himself to oppose its progress. Let him hush the raging tempest: Let him calm the rocking deep: Let him arrest the sun in his march of grandeur through the heavens: Let him subvert the throne of the Eternal; then will we cease to pity the deluded man, who hopes to injure the kingdom of Immanuel. His warfare is with Omnipotence; and he had better desist from the controversy at once; and like Paul stand forth a champion of the faith he would destroy. He might thus avoid hours, ages, an *eternity*, of mortification, as well as anguish. For Christianity, *in its purity*, must visit every land, province, and village; not merely to learn the condition of mankind; but to establish her empire. She shall achieve one victory after another, over ignorance, prejudice, and corruption; and in one land and province after another, fix her standard, till a voice from heaven shall proclaim, *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.*

And never has the Christian cause pressed on more swiftly to such a consummation, than at this very moment. Jehovah is most manifestly

coming forth in his strength to build up Zion. Copious showers of heavenly influence are even now descending. Ten thousand streams are contributing to swell that river of God which is to water the whole earth. We can see the empire of Christ fast rising and spreading. To resist the claims of Christianity at such a period, then, under a cloak of infidelity or covetousness, or to think of degrading the Holy One of Israel, can be regarded only as most consummate *folly*.

4. The occurrences of the day of Pentecost exhibit THE GRAND MEANS of advancing the cause of Christ, and saving sinners.

Jehovah has revealed the determination to spread his truth over the earth, and to rescue a countless multitude from spiritual and eternal death. We can not but be aware of his ability to do this, independently of human aid. He can, by his Spirit, enlighten and sanctify the whole world in the twinkling of an eye. He is nevertheless pleased to accomplish his designs of mercy, by the intervention of MEANS. And the grand means he has appointed, as developed on the day of Pentecost, *are the ministrations of the Gospel*. In connexion with these, the triumphs of that day were gained.

It is not doubted, that other means, auxiliary, may be usefully employed. Divine truth, in whatever way presented to the mind, may become the instrument of sanctification. We read instances of the *Sacred Volume* having gone to regions trod by no Christian teacher's foot, and there disclosing the perfections, and urging the claims of Jehovah, with important effect. Often has a *religious Tract* been the commissioned angel of saving mercy. Often has a *sudden death*, a burst of *thunder*, or other providential occurrence, impressed some truth of God with everlasting solemnity on the soul.

Still these means of grace may be only subordinate in importance to the ministrations of God's special appointment. *It pleased God by the foolishness of* PREACHING *to save them that believe.* If Divine influence has in any place distilled, as dew upon Hermon, and the church risen in strength and beauty, it has been in connexion with the appropriate labours of the sacred office. Eighteen centuries ago the Gospel went forth from Jerusalem on an embassy of mingled authority and love. It has traversed the globe. And under its influence the stupid pagan has renounced his foolish rites; the sensualist his scenes of low crime; the proud have been humbled; the desponding cheered; the Saviour has received the homage and confidence of millions; and heaven has obtained steady accessions to the number of its purified and happy population. But where has the Gospel achieved any extended triumphs, ex-

cept as its truths have been explained and urged, by an ambassador for Christ ?

Who will doubt the pre-eminent importance of the Christian ministry, as a means of salvation, when he looks at the Divine sanction it received on the day of Pentecost? The ministrations of that day were the first public efforts under the commission, *Preach the Gospel to every creature—beginning at Jerusalem.* And the signal success bade the devoted apostles go forward in the sacred enterprise of proclaiming a crucified and ascended Saviour. And to the Church at large it addresses a similar language. Let her then train up her sons of promise for the sacred office ; let her plant a spiritual watchman in every village of the territory she now claims ; and let her despatch her heralds of truth to all the revolted nations under heaven.

From the day of Pentecost we also learn, *what kind* of preaching is fitted to accomplish the gracious designs of Heaven. The grand theme of Peter's discourse was *Jesus of Nazareth*,—his character, life, death, resurrection, and supremacy. He failed not to exhibit distinctly the sovereignty—the *determinate counsel*—as well as foreknowledge of God ; while, with the same breath, he pressed on his hearers the conviction of *personal guilt.* He urged the duty of *immediate* repentance, and the necessity of a cordial faith in the Saviour, as *both Lord and Christ.* On these several topicks he spake with the utmost boldness. He could charge upon his hearers the crime of murdering God's beloved Son. He could say, that they perpetrated the deed with *wicked hands.* And it was from a sense of *guilt*, as well as danger, that they trembled.

Unwelcome as were the topicks of that discourse, it was adapted to accomplish the objects of the Christian ministry ; as appeared from the result. Thus sanctioned, it is obviously worthy of the careful attention of all who minister at God's altar. From it let them learn, what should be the grand theme of their ministrations ;—*Jesus Christ*, his character and offices : From it let them learn, what should ever be a leading object ;—to make men *feel* that they are *guilty* : From it let them learn to proclaim explicitly and fearlessly the whole character of God, and the exact message with which they are charged from Him. In so doing they may awaken the rancour of a sour unbelief ; they may disturb the repose of a heedless impenitence ; they may call forth the loud clamour, *This is an hard saying; who can bear it?* But they may also be ministers of *Salvation;* and contribute something to swell the honours of their King. Possibly, like Peter, they may " open the gate of heaven to a multitude of sinners."

Instead of being followers of inspired Apostles, they *can* consult the prejudices and caprices of a world lying in sin. They *can* keep aloof

from the cross of the despised Lamb, and the terrors of the burning Mount. They *can* cast a veil over the blackness of human depravity, and amuse when they ought to alarm. And for their reward they may receive the liberal caresses of the gay and the proud. But what will such men have accomplished for Christ, their Master?—or for the happiness of their hearers, when the visions of time shall have given place to the realities of Eternity? Who will be led to ponder on the mighty interests of the soul, the solemnity of death, the awfulness of Judgment, and the duration of future joy or wo? Who will be led to weep over his sins, to seek counsel from the page of Revelation, or to unburden an oppressed heart in the closet of prayer? What youth will become tired of his pursuits of gaiety and folly? What votary of ambition will stop in his eager chase after a phantom? Or what man of sordid avarice will chastise his idolatry, and pant for a treasure in heaven? It is not every ministry, that is fitted to reclaim the wayward; to restore to the human heart the lost image of God; and to prepare the sinner for a future crown. It is only the ministry of the *Gospel*;—that ministry which makes a full disclosure of whatever is humbling in the doctrines, and terrible in the sanctions, as well as cheering in the invitations and promises of the New Testament. And the usefulness of *such* a ministry was strikingly illustrated on that day, when the multitude were pricked in their hearts, and inquired, with no ordinary solicitude, what they should do, and wept over their sins, and submitted to God, and looked up with *a hope full of immortality*.

Wonder not, then, sinner, if the minister of Jesus, who would save himself and them that hear him, and who has such *examples* before him, does feel it his duty, to tear away the miserable veils which hide men from themselves, and to exhibit the unchanging majesty of God's Law, and the deep damnation that must ingulph the impenitent and unbelieving! For *herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment.*

5. The occurrences of the day of Pentecost exhibit the Christian minister's GRAND SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

The apostles understood the nature of God's moral administration. They felt their utter incompetency to maintain the Christian cause in their own strength; but were still aware of the necessity of using the instituted means. Relying solely on the promise of the Saviour, *they were all with one accord in one place*—presenting doubtless a united and fervent supplication to Heaven for the aid they needed.—Filled with the Holy Ghost, they ventured to preach—they *spake forth the words*

of truth and soberness. And that same Spirit of truth carried their message with renovating power to the hearts and consciences of their hearers.

The ground of their success teaches, that the minister's grand source of encouragement, in all his labours, is *the promised influence of the Spirit.* He needs other aid than the man of merely secular business. He needs something more than the common blessing of the Most High. There is a peculiarity in the character of his work, which renders necessary a peculiarity in the agency of the Spirit. He seeks to convert mankind from the love and practice of iniquity to the love and service of God; to raise to a spiritual life such as are *dead in trespasses and sins.* The carnal mind is *enmity against God*—destitute of a single trace of its Maker's moral image. This enmity must be *slain;* and in its place must be substituted that *holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*

To effect so entire a transformation of character, what human powers are adequate? Talents may dazzle, reasoning may confound, eloquence may charm and move, fortitude and zeal may press through a thousand disheartening difficulties; but God *only can convert. Not by might, nor by power, but by my* Spirit, *saith the Lord of hosts.* From this position, however, let the *sinner* make no other inference than that of the exceeding *sinfulness* and *obstinacy* of his own heart, which will yield only to Omnipotent Grace. It is nothing but *ingratitude* and *stubbornness of guilt,* that prevents his yielding at once *to the convictions of truth,* and giving his whole heart to God. So that, if left to perish in his obstinacy, he dies without excuse, and in the day of reckoning will be speechless. Let him not, then, aggravate his guilt by now *charging God foolishly.*

To the feebleness of merely human effort, in attempting to convert the sinner, experience bears most humiliating testimony. Within the compass of our charge is many a man of business, and many a youth of folly, on whom our eye of deep concern has often been fixed. We have noticed, with agony, their increasing aversion to the ways of God, and their increasing attachment to an unsatisfying world. We have hoped, all the while, that very soon some message from the throne of God might be the means of rousing their torpid sensibilities, and changing the current of their affections: but they never were devoted more exclusively and intensely to objects of a transitory nature, than at this moment. Gladly would we dissolve the spell by which they are bound; but their persevering unholiness, and their heedlessness about the eternal interests of the soul, proclaim to us the utter insufficiency of our efforts.

Not only, however, is the almighty Spirit the Christian minister's *grand* source of encouragement; it is a very *fruitful* source. Apart from

the special influence of the Spirit, the apostles had little indeed to encourage—and every thing to damp their hopes, and paralyze their energies. Yet they were not disheartened. They called to mind the precious promises of their Lord, and on them fastened their hope. They braved the contempt and opposition of thousands; and in their presence the strength of man became weakness, and the loftiness of man was abased.

Those promises which sustained apostles are ground of *perpetual* encouragement. Lo, I am with you *alway*, even unto the *end of the world*. Here then we see Omnipotence pledged to make the ministry of reconciliation an engine of resistless moral power, till *time shall be no longer*. Toils, vexations, and trials attend it; but so do peculiar consolations. Oh, it is cheering to reflect, that though man can neither convert nor convince, there is a power on high which *can* clothe his ministrations with almighty energy. A power it is, that can humble the proudest spirit. It can soften the hardest heart. It can extort from the most careless, in a moment, the inquiry of deep concern. It can instantaneously shed over our worshiping assembly the solemnity *of the second* death; and thrill every heart with the resistless mandate, *Awake thou that sleepest*. Nor is this a mere matter of ability. There is no degree of thoughtlessness, which it has not actually alarmed. There is no stubbornness of depravity, which it has not subdued,—as it has gone along with the ministrations of the sanctuary.

With such ground of encouragement, we will preach in hope. We will continue to illustrate and enforce the great truths of Christianity, relying for the fruit of our labours, on that Spirit of power and grace, whose prerogative it is to quicken and sanctify. With the sword of the Spirit, *which is the word of God*, we will continue to urge our appeals to the heart and conscience, till our voice shall become silent in the grave. And could we rise, hereafter, with the great multitude found *faithful unto death*; we would still say, with every creature in heaven—*Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name, give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.*

One other lesson from the events of the day of Pentecost, and we have done.

6. The occurrences of that day exhibit the REALITY and IMPORTANCE of REVIVALS of RELIGION.

By a Revival of religion, we understand, *an uncommon and general interest on the subject of salvation, produced by the Holy Spirit, through*

the instrumentality of Divine truth. The work is very commonly preceded by a prevailing and affecting coldness on the subject of personal religion: such as leads Christians to feel the necessity of extraordinary prayer for themselves as well as others. In its progress, the thoughtless are alarmed; convinced of their guilt; inquire what they shall do; receive Jesus as their Saviour; rejoice in hope of future glory; join themselves to the people of God; and, in important respects, pursue a new course of life.

Such, substantially, was the Revival on the day of Pentecost. With the history of that day before us, we see thousands assemble, with no special solicitude about their souls; and many of them very decided in their opposition to Christiantiy. We see the same men, soon after, most deeply interested on the subject of salvation. We see them, in the anguish of awakened conscience, at the feet of despised apostles, inquiring what they must do. We see them resorting, with penitence and faith, to the mediation of Christ for pardon. We see them joining themselves to the little band of disciples; and devoting their influence and possessions to the cause of the Gospel. We ascribe that memorable work to the special agency of God's Spirit; and denominate it a *Revival of religion.* And when, in these latter days, and these ends of the earth, we witness a work of *similar character*, we feel bound to ascribe it to the same *Cause;* and think it proper to give to it the same name. We can perceive no good reason, why the former should be regarded as the work of God, and the latter as the work exclusively of man.

Do you say, that the excitement, denominated a Revival of religion, occurs in connexion with the special efforts of Christians? We answer, that the excitement on the day of Pentecost occurred in a similar connexion. When has a band of Christians been more united and fervent? Or when has a minister of Christ pressed the subject of religion with more plainness, pungency, and zeal, than did Peter, and his brethren? And again we reply, that God's instituted mode of extending the blessings of salvation, is through the faithful efforts of his servants. *If thou speakest not to warn the wicked of his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.*

Do you say, that the divine influence to which we allude, as to the *mode* of its operation, is enveloped in the darkness of *mystery?* So it was on the day of Pentecost. So is the *universal presence* of the Supreme a mystery. And so does a cloud of impenetrable obscurity hang over the *mode* of *all* his operations. If mystery must produce skepticism, tells us, where will your doubtings end?

Do you say, there is enthusiasm connected with the excitement, denominated a Revival of religion? Enthusiasm there sometimes may

have been. *Fanaticism* there may have been. But does such a fact prove the entire absence of genuine religion? Does it prove, that no Revival is a sober, rational work? Possibly, had you lived eighteen centuries ago, you might, in pity, have pronounced Peter an enthusiast! and the events of the day of Pentecost a scene of wild phrenzy! But possibly, too, some *centuries hereafter*, you may mourn, too late, your own *madness*. Are not *you* the *enthusiast*, if you hope to enter heaven, despising the command of heaven's King!—*Strive to enter in at the straight gate. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence.*

Do you say, that in a time of general excitement there will be instances of gross imposition on the Church? So it was in the Pentecost revival; when, in awful warning to hypocrites, Ananias and Sapphira fell down dead. But did their hypocrisy close the door of heaven against the thousands who sincerely repented? Or did it lessen their abhorrence of sin? or their everlasting gratitude to Him who made them to differ?

Do you say, that the excitement, denominated a Revival of religion, is often succeeded by instances of apostacy? We answer, that apostacies have likewise occurred under other circumstances. Of them the Church was forewarned by its Head, when he declared, *It must needs be that offences come.* And from the little band, collected by Himself in person, there was an apostate as vile as the Church ever embosomed. But did the perfidy of Judas disprove the sincerity of the rest? And if a Revival has been succeeded by defection, which evinces the hypocrisy or delusion of some, what does their fall prove, one way or the other, as to the religion of others?

In the progress of our experience, relating to such seasons of attention, we *have seen* circumstances which furnished overwhelming evidence of God's special presence. We have stood in awe of His majesty, in view of the general solemnity that reigned around us: a solemnity produced by no visible cause, other than the ordinary means of grace. We *have seen* the tide of gaiety and folly at once arrested, the loftiest look brought low, and the stoutest heart melted in penitence. We *have seen* the man of *morals*—intrenched for more than half a century within his refuges of lies, and dreaming of no danger—suddenly waked from his delusion, and—fearfully alarmed at the insecurity of his hiding-place—finding no rest, day nor night, till in the Ark of Safety. We *have seen* the slave of *appetite* and *lust* raised up from the debasement of a ruined fortune and character, and rescued as from the very *gate of hell!* We have seen him, afterwards, shining in the beauty of holiness, regaining the full confidence of community, and elevating his affections to the throne of God! And when we have witnessed facts like these, and have been aware of no other visible cause, than a plain, but calm exhi-

bition of Evangelical truth—we have instinctively exclaimed, *The work, O Lord, is thine; and it is marvellous in our eyes.*

But, not only does the day of Pentecost evince the *reality* of Revivals of religion; it furnishes reason to calculate on their existence, in all ages. Commencing as they did with the very commencement of Christianity, there was reason to believe they would accompany her in her march over the world. On such displays of Divine grace were fixed the hopes of the apostles. Nor in their expectations were they disappointed. The very first sermon preached by Peter in a *Gentile* province, was attended with similar effects. *The Holy Ghost came on all them that heard the word.* In proclaiming the Gospel, the apostles urged, as a motive to repentance, the animating fact, that *the times of refreshing had come from the presence of the Lord.* And by such repeated displays of Divine grace were they sustained, and peculiarly encouraged in their holy enterprise.

Ours is likewise an age of religious revival. Each passing year gives to it this character in still more distinctive features. And doubtless as the period of Zion's universal triumph comes on, these showers of God's grace will exhibit still greater majesty and power. The victories of the Spirit will become more and more extended, as well as illustrious. All Christendom is yet to be overshadowed by one vast cloud of Divine influence. Lands, doomed for generations to a state of moral darkness and death, shall be watered and made fruitful, *like the garden of God.* And in the holy City itself, *now trodden down of the Gentiles*, shall be repeated those displays of power and grace, which attended the first preaching of the Cross.

The occurrences of the day of Pentecost exhibit likewise the *importance* of Revivals of religion. If they are actually of God, we know that their influence must be only salutary. Look back then to that memorable Revival, which ushered in the Christian ministry; and tell us if its influence was at all otherwise than salutary. On the very day of its commencement, about three thousand were turned from darkness to light: and, during its continuance, *the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.* Were they less honest, sober, benevolent, than before their conversion? Or were they less qualified for the dread trial of the Last Day? In a single day, it gave to the Christian Church a weight of influence, more than a hundred fold greater than it had previously possessed. And whilst it gave new impulse to her efforts, it was the occasion of dismay to her opposers. The testimony it bore to the dignity of Jesus, and the truth of Christianity, will exert a blessed influence forever.

The happy influence of a Revival may be viewed, distinctly, in its effects, on individual happiness; on the interests of the community; and on the general cause of religion.

It is important to *individual* happiness. Such religious character as it creates is the only safe pledge of a peaceful life. You can spare the aggrandizements of wealth, and the parade of earthly distinction. But, in this world of disease, disappointment, and death, you *can not* spare the consolations of a Christian hope. But a single glance into *eternity* stamps immeasureable value on the religious character which is originated in a season of Revival. Oh, beware of risking the trial of the Great Day, in any other character, than that which produced by the transforming Spirit. You may have passed through a season of religious attention, and in it become a happy subject of God's grace. Others may attach to it a trivial importance; but by yourself it shall be recurred to with ecstacy, and with thanksgiving to God, when the heavens shall be no more.

A religious Revival exerts a happy influence on the *community at large*. The Gospel and the sanctifying Spirit, wherever *they enter*, enlighten, elevate, and purify. Their dominion over the heart secures a regularity of deportment, an industrious improvement of time, a scrupulous discharge of the varied duties of life. Often has a short period of the Spirit's gracious operation allayed the asperity of contention; calmed the tumult of a noisy rabble; put an end to scenes of midnight wickedness; brought relief to dwellings of domestic want and wo; and greatly elevated the intellectual, as well as moral character of society.

On the *general cause of religion* the influence of a Revival is immense, as well as salutary. The happy influence is not circumscribed by the limits of the Spirit's immediate operation. It may reach to the ends of the earth—and onward through time. It may be the commencing link in a chain of operations, which shall issue in the rescue of millions from the agonies of the second death.

Revivals hasten the universal triumph of the Gospel. Let the Churches of Christendom be found, this year, *with one accord* pleading the Redeemer's great promise—Let every city and village be a theatre of Revivals, like that in which Peter and his associates were the visible agents, —and it would be the ushering in of millennial glory.

If then the work we are contemplating be indeed a work of God; and if such be its influence on *individual happiness*—on the interests of *society* —and on the *general cause of religion*,—O give to it, Christian brethren, the full ardour of your affections and prayers. Go to the place of secret communion with God, to the domestic altar, to the social meeting, to the sanctuary of the Most High, with the effectual fervent peti-

tion,—*O Lord, revive thy work.* Do you ask for encouragement? Know that He has declared himself more ready to grant the Holy Spirit, than parents are to give good gifts to their children. Do you need examples of devotedness? Fix your eye on those holy apostles—who, after having turned thousands to righteousness, were counted worthy to suffer *martyrdom* for the name of Christ. Ye *have not yet resisted unto* BLOOD, *striving against sin.* Do you lack motive? Open your eye upon the scene that lies within the compass of your vision.—Perhaps religion is languishing. Perhaps the commandments of God are openly violated. Perhaps the world, in its varied forms of attraction, is the all-engrossing object. Perhaps the tide of population is pressing on in a direction ominous of a dreary eternity. Ascend some lofty eminence, and extend your view over the earth. Mark the territory enlightened by Revelation, and reclaimed from the destroyer;—how small it is! Leave for a moment this world, so soon to be wrapped in consuming fire, and approach the Celestial. Survey the glory, and hearken to the hosannas of the saved. Then look down on the awful contrast!—and onward beyond the Judgment scene! Under the influence of what you have discovered—go back to your devotions. And, like the weeping Prophet, who beheld these realities with more than mortal eye, in God's strength make your firm resolve,—that *for Zion's sake you will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.*

We are not so visionary as to expect an unusual success in the progress of religion, unless there are unusual omens. But, says one of the brightest spirits of England, "A most emphatical spirit of prayer would *be* such an omen. And the individual, who should solemnly determine to try its last possible efficacy, might probably find himself becoming a much more prevailing agent in his little sphere. And if the whole, or greater number, of the disciples of Christianity, were, with an earnest, unalterable resolution of each, to combine that Heaven should not withhold one single influence which the very utmost effort of conspiring and persevering supplication would obtain, it would be the sign that a revolution of the world was at hand."

Nor can I suppress the consideration, that, even now, there are signs, which seem to afford peculiar encouragement to such special and united prayer for a universal Revival. It was a striking proof of the determination of Heaven to spread the Gospel through the world, that Jerusalem should have been selected as the place, and the day of Pentecost as the season, for the first great out-pouring of the Spirit: because a blow then and there struck could not fail to tell with emphasis on all the surrounding nations. So, in our own day, it is a sig-

nal from Heaven, of no ordinary import, that the Spirit is actually descending in power on several of our large Cities and towns, as well as on Colleges and Seminaries of learning. The consequence of which is, that men of wealth and extended influence are brought to *count all things but loss for Christ;* and champions of truth and heralds of salvation are thus multiplied. At the same time, the Missionary channels, which are daily opening, and the Religious Publications, which are circulating, by thousands and by tens of thousands, afford facilities of communication, altogether unparallelled in the history of Christ's kingdom. So that now, as on the day of Pentecost, the influence of a great Revival might be at once felt through the world. Let, then, the whole multitude of disciples now *lift up their eyes unto the Heavens;* let them say with one accord,—*Come from the four winds, O Breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live,—that thy way may be known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations.*

And now, ye commissioned *servants of the Living God,* this whole subject speaks with solemn emphasis to you and to me. But here, I am aware, it becomes a young man to be reserved. I will only repeat the words of one, whom, like Peter, the Spirit of God hath greatly honoured.—"How soon, my brethren, will the amazing realities of Judgment and Eternity break upon our unearthly vision, and fill us either with ecstacy or despair! I cast my thoughts forward but a little, and behold, the dead are rising, the elements melting, saints rejoicing, devils trembling. The Judge appears upon his great white throne—In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we are before the judgment seat, with our respective flocks. The faithful and the unfaithful shepherds of every age are there. The trial proceeds, the books are closed, the final sentence is pronounced. The heavens are opened, and the pit yawns—the eternal song and the eternal wail are both begun. O may we then rise, with a great multitude saved through our unworthy instrumentality, to shine with them, *as the brightness of the firmament—as the stars forever and ever.*" AMEN.

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SERMON XVI.

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THE GREAT CHANGE.

II. Cor. v. 17.—*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.*

It is not uncommon for men, in the darkness of apostacy from God, to imagine that there is no great difference of character between saints and sinners: that since Jesus Christ has died, and the Holy Ghost been sent down from Heaven, men can become interested in the blessings of salvation without experiencing any great moral change. But the testimony of God is, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

What does this mean? In a plain scriptural manner to answer this question, will be my object in this discourse.

I. If any man be in Christ he has a *new God.*

Such is the nature of the human soul that it must have a God; an object of supreme affection. It cannot exist in the rational exercise of all its powers without loving some object supremely. This, in the language of the Bible, is its God. And the character of the soul is determined by the character of its God.

Before the apostacy, man loved Jehovah supremely. But Satan, the father of lies, came into Eden, and told our first parents, that if they would eat of the fruit which God had forbidden, *they* should be as gods. He did not say that this would glorify Jehovah, or benefit

their posterity; but he said that it would exalt themselves. Self, as an object of supreme regard, was now brought distinctly before them: And out of supreme regard to themselves, they disobeyed God:—they *took of the fruit and did eat:* And men *out of Christ*, have regarded themselves supremely ever since. But if any man be in *Christ*, he is, in this respect, a *new creature*. He no longer regards himself supremely, but Jehovah. He has the same God that Adam had before his apostacy. Mark the change when man apostatized: Before, he loved Jehovah supremely: after, himself. Mark the change when a man becomes a new creature. Before, he loves himself supremely: after, Jehovah. Great change: from loving supremely the creature, to loving supremely the Creator. He has a new God.

II. He has a *new object of pursuit*.

It is a fundamental principle of human action, that every man will seek to please his own God. The man who is in Christ, having changed his God, changes of course his object of pursuit. Before, his object was to exalt and gratify himself. Now, his object is to please and glorify Jehovah. The man may continue in the same worldly employment, if a lawful one, in which he was before; and he may do many of the same things, with his hands, which he did before; but he has in view a totally different *object*;—not his own exaltation, but the glory of God, and the spiritual, eternal happiness of men. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined into his heart, and given him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He is not his own, he is bought with a price; and his feelings respond to his duty;—glorify God, in body and spirit which are His. Whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does, his grand, ruling object is, to do all to the glory of God. Hence,

III. He adopts a *new rule of action*.

It is another law of human action, that every man will adopt such a rule as he thinks will accomplish his object. The man who is in Christ, having changed his grand object of pursuit, changes, of course, his rule of action. Before, his rule was to do those things, and those only, which he thought would elevate himself; or in some way promote his own advantage. Now, his rule is to do those things, and those only, which God declares will glorify Him, and promote the happiness of

His holy kingdom. His own will was the rule of action before; now, the revealed will of God. And when his own will comes into competition with the will of God, his language is, Not my will, but *thine* be done. This is the habitual desire of his heart. And he exhibits it, not in words only, but in actions. For,

IV. He lives a *new life*:—a life of faith on the Son of God, who loved him, and gave Himself for him.

This faith is that confidence in Christ, which leads the man to *feel* that what He hath said is true; and to *treat* it as true. Hence he looks principally, not at things seen and temporal; but at things unseen and eternal. He lays up his treasure, not on the earth, but in Heaven; and seeks those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The love of Christ constrains him to live, not unto himself, but unto Him that died for him and rose again. I do not mean by this that he is perfectly holy. He still commits sin; but he loathes himself on account of it, and repents as in dust and ashes. He will not continue to indulge in what he knows to be sin; nor will he continue to neglect what he knows to be duty. He seeks by prayer and supplication to know what duty is; and he listens to the voice of God in revelation, that he may understand, for the purpose of *doing* it: and, so far as he knows, he has respect to *all* His commandments.

This obedience to the divine commands, springs from *new views*, and is prompted by *new feelings*. These views and feelings, as the grand spring of outward obedience, I shall briefly illustrate with regard to five particulars, viz. *God*, *Jesus Christ*, *the Holy Ghost*, *himself*, *and his fellow men*.

He has new views and feelings with regard to God. Before, he never saw any peculiar beauty, excellence, and glory in the character of God; especially in his holiness, justice, and truth. He never saw any reason why he should love God, any farther than he thought that God loved him; and would ultimately favour *his* cause. His soul *never* was chained by the splendours of the Eternal throne; nor was it ever enraptured with the beauty of the holiness of Him that sits upon it. He never had such views of the glory of God, as to be changed into His image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

But now he sees a beauty, a loveliness, an excellence, and a glory in God, surpassing the lustre of all creation. Not that the man has become blind to created glories: he loves his friends, and all his fellow men, more than he ever loved them before; and with a more pure and exalted affection. If any of them are holy, he sees a beauty and excellence in their character, which he never saw before; and he delights in it. But when he looks on God, though at a distance, and through a glass darkly, created excellence *dies*. The glories even of Gabriel, and of all created intelligences, are swallowed up and lost in the overflowing glories of the Godhead; and he cries, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon the earth that I desire beside thee."

Before, he had no *confidence* in God. When disappointed in his favourite plans,—when his dearest earthly prospects were blasted,—it gave him no comfort to think, that *God* had done it. Now, though the fig-tree should not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vine; the labour of the olive fail, and the fields yield no meat; though the flocks be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stall; he will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of his salvation.

He did not, before, feel *safe* in God's hands. When his conscience was awakened, and he was led to feel his guilt; and also to feel that all his interests for time and eternity were in the hands of God, and at His disposal, he was distressed. Now, he wishes to be no where else. He surrenders himself, his friends, and all his interests, for both worlds, into the hands of God, and chooses to have them for ever at His disposal. So long as he can say, "The Lord reigneth," he will add, "Let earth rejoice." And the more deeply he feels that His kingdom extends over all, the greater his joy, till it becomes unspeakable, and full of glory.

He may have thought, before, that God was a respecter of persons, and been ready, at times, to charge Him with partiality. He may have lived in a place, visited by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit; may have seen his friends and acquaintances awakened from the slumbers of moral death; and brought out of darkness into marvellous light. He may have seen their joy, and heard their songs; while he, after long, distressing anxiety, and many tears, may have been still in darkness and the shadow of death; groaning in dismal horrors of conscience, and fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation:

under a load of guilt, which was pressing him downward toward eternal despair. In this situation, he may have thought that God was hard, partial, a respecter of persons; and been almost ready to curse his God and King, and look upward. But the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, breaks in upon him, and he cries, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and of earth: Even so, Father, for so it hath seemed good in thy sight—Bless the Lord in all places of his dominion: Bless the Lord, O my soul."

He has new views and feelings with regard to the Lord Jesus Christ. He may have viewed Jesus Christ as an excellent character, before; and made mention of Him in his prayers, when he prayed. And he did, perhaps, sometimes pray;—in a thunder-storm, when the lightning blazed around him; or in time of sickness, when he stood over the bed of his dying friend; or when, at midnight, he anticipated his own death, and the coming judgment. When he felt in danger, when death and eternity seemed to be nigh, he attempted to pray; and he not unfrequently made mention of the name of Christ; but he had no view of His divine, transcendent glory. He saw no reason why angels should veil their faces, cast down their crowns, fall prostrate, and worship Him. Perhaps he thought him to be only a man; or at most an exalted creature. But he is now the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. He is the Alpha and Omega; the Beginning and the End, which is, and was, and is to come, the Almighty. He is over all, God blessed for ever. He is also partaker of human nature; and can be touched with the feeling of human infirmity. He is the Propitiation for sins;—for *our* sins, and for the sins of the whole world. He is the End of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. He is an Advocate with the Father, the believer's *Life*. Take away his Divine Saviour,—you take away his only hope. He has no access to God; no deliverer from sin; no Saviour from perdition. In the agony of guilt, he sees no way in which God can be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly.

But the glories of Immanuel break forth on Calvary, with a brightness which puts out the sun; and in that light, he sees that God *can* be just, and yet the justifier of every one that believeth. And in view of the length, and the breadth, and the height of that love which passeth knowledge, he feels that He *will* do it; and he sings, Alleluia, salvation, and honour, and glory to the Lord our God. Such an High

Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, higher than the heavens, and able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by Him: This is all my salvation, and all my desire.

He has new views and feelings with regard to the Holy Ghost. He had probably heard that there was a Holy Ghost, before; but, perhaps, he did not believe it. Or if he did believe it, he knew next to *nothing* about Him. He never felt in perishing need of the Holy Ghost. He felt as if he could pray, and give to the poor, keep the Sabbath, pay his honest debts, and do many other things, in a manner *acceptable to God*, without the influences of the Holy Ghost. But he now feels that without Him he shall do nothing acceptable; and rejoices that God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. He knows by experience what this means, "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities." And he knows what this means, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." *The* man who is in Christ feels deeply his need, not only of a Redeemer, but a *Sanctifier;* One who can enlighten his understanding, purify and elevate his affections, and prepare him to be presented spotless and faultless before the throne of Divine glory, with exceeding and everlasting joy. He has already experienced of the exceeding greatness of His power, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead. Had it not been for the Holy Ghost, he had been to this day impenitent, unbelieving, dead in trespasses and sins; going downward toward eternal death. He knows this, he *feels* it, and in the feelings of his heart cries, To Him be the glory. God, he says, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts. God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. We are His workmanship, created anew, in Christ Jesus, unto good works.

He has new views and feelings with regard to himself. Before, he thought himself to be as good as others;—as good, at heart, as many professors of religion; and vastly better than some. When he compared himself with other men, as he often did, especially with some professors of religion, he felt himself to be almost good enough. Instead of crying, God be merciful to me a sinner; he felt more like saying, I thank thee that I am not as other men. He had no idea that *his*

heart was deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. He thought that he was rich, increased in goods, and had need of nothing; not that he was poor, miserable, blind, naked, and in want of all things. When told of his character and condition, by some faithful minister, or some Christian friend, he did not believe them. All these things, he was ready to say, have I kept from my youth up: What lack I?

But his views are now totally changed. He sees that he has been violating the first commandment, through his whole course of moral action:—he has had another God before Jehovah, and been serving the creature, not the Creator. He has sought his own glory, above the glory of God and all the happiness of His kingdom. Never has he such views of the desperate wickedness of the human heart, as when, with fixed eye, he gazes on himself. He has been regardless of the Saviour, deaf to the calls of mercy, and trampling on dying love. O, he is vile, and has nothing to answer. His very soul is stained with guilt, which nothing but the blood of Christ can wash away. Now he sees, why Jesus must enter the holy place with His *blood;* and begins to feel the worth of a Saviour. Now, too, he feels his need of a Sanctifier, who can create in him a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within him; who, though his sins are indeed as scarlet, and as crimson, can make them white as snow. And while he finds that in himself dwells no good thing, and cries, in anguish of spirit, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? he is enabled, through grace, to add, Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. I live, yet not I; but Christ liveth in me: and, by the grace of God, I am what I am.

He has new views and feelings with regard to his fellow-men. Once he looked on them with a great degree of indifference; unless they were, in some way, particularly connected with *him.* The consequence was, he would do little, except for himself, his relatives, or particular friends. And he would do little for them, except for the body, or for this world. His soul was bounded, on every side, by the narrow limits of *self*, and of *time.*

Now, he rises, and looks over the whole family of man. He views each one that passes before his mind, with deep emotion, and ardently longs for his *eternal* good. His eye fastens on the *soul;* he follows it on to the judgment, and onward still, while it expands in endless being;

and he feels that it is worth a thousand worlds: it lives when worlds expire, and lives to sing—or weep for ever. Hence you may see him laying out plans for doing good hundreds and thousands of years to come; and to the whole empire of Jehovah. Bursting out from the limits of self, and of time, his love, like the light of heaven, pours forth on creation, and settles upon every object that is able to receive it: it goes onward into eternity, and onward—and too divine to spend itself on creatures, it rises up to God,—and, kindled anew by the glories of the Godhead, shines brighter and brighter for ever. Show *him the* will of God, and you govern him to all eternity; and his grand object at every step will be, to become more and more *like* God. The consequence is,

V. The man who is in Christ has *new joys*. His joys are as much more pure, expansive, and exalted, as are his views, affections, and efforts. Once, he rejoiced in himself, and in this world. His joys rose or fell, as he thought himself and his connexions to be, for *this world*. exalted, or depressed.

Now, he rejoices in hope of the glory of God, and in the rising prospects of Immanuel's kingdom. Hence he loves the Bible in which these prospects are unfolded. He makes it the man of his counsel, his daily companion, and he reads it with great delight; especially the promises made to Zion. As he reads, the prospect brightens; he gazes with new delight, and is borne along till he sees the wilderness bud and blossom; hears songs of deliverance in the desert, and praises of salvation from every land, to God and his Christ. And as he gazes, and wonders, and adores, he is borne onward till he sees a multitude that no man can number, coming up in glorified bodies, like the body of Jesus Christ;—he sees them ascending, and catches their alleluias, as they enter heaven and bow with rapture before Him that loved them and gave himself for them. And,

VI. He has *new hopes*. He hopes soon to be among them, and to make one in that great congregation.

I do not mean by this, that he had no hope in days of impenitence and unbelief. He *had* a hope. But what good did it do him? It did not purify his soul. It did not wean him from the world. It did not make him like Christ; nor did it fit him for the employments or the joys of heaven. Had he died with only that hope, he would have been to-day, in hopeless despair.

Now, he has a *good* hope. It arises from having the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost. It weans him from the world, quickens him in duty, and leads him to have respect to all God's commandments. It leads him to be humble, to abhor himself, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, to have his heart and conversation in heaven, and to "purify himself, even as God is pure."

Nor will this hope, like that of the wicked, perish at the giving up of the ghost. No, it will be an anchor sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil; and it will not fail, till it is swallowed up in cloudless, and eternal vision. Even now, he is borne in everlasting arms; angels minister unto him; all things work together for his good, and help to increase that exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And when absent from the body, he is present with the Lord—he sees Him as he is—he is *like* Him, and mingles with that multitude which no man can number, in their anthem of glory to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

In view of what has been suggested, I remark,

1. That the man who is in Christ has experienced a *great* change.

If he has a *new God*, a *new object of pursuit*, a *new rule of action*, and lives a *new life*,—a life of obedience to God; if his outward actions spring from *new views* and *feelings* with regard to *God*, to *Jesus Christ*, to the *Holy Ghost*, to *himself*, and his *fellow men*; if these views and feelings lead him to have respect to *all* God's commandments; and thus give him *new joys*, and *new hopes*,—hopes, well founded, of dwelling eternally with God, and being in heart, perfectly like Him,—then surely he has experienced a *great* change. The Holy Ghost did not say too much, when in describing it He said, "born again"—"created anew"—"brought out of darkness into marvellous light"—"passed from death unto life."

2. If he who is in Christ has experienced this *great* change, then there is a *great* difference between the man who is in Christ, and the man who is out of Christ; or, in other words, between a saint and a sinner.

If men can bring themselves to believe that there is no *great* difference of character between saints and sinners *here*, then they hope that there will be no great difference of condition between them *hereafter*. But such a hope is *vain*. Say ye, saith God, to the righteous, It shall be well with him. But, wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him. The difference of character is so great between them, in this world, as to fit them for that great and eternal difference of condition in the world to come.

The gods they serve are of totally different characters. The God of the saint, is as different from the god of the sinner, as the Holy One of Israel is from a sinful dying man. This makes a great difference between their own characters, in this world; and it must make a great and eternal difference between their conditions in the world to come. Jehovah requires the *heart*. If this is withheld, he is robbed of *every* thing. And should any one continue to withhold his heart from God, and give it to other objects, he will depart accursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;—*he will* be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

Fellow-mortal, hastening to the judgment; have *you* become *a new creature?* I do not ask you when, nor where, nor how; but have you *ever* become a new creature? Have you chosen Jehovah, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for your God? Is it your great object to *glorify Him?* and is His revealed will your *rule of action?* Do you have respect to *all* his commandments, for the sake of glorifying *Him*, and doing good; trusting in Jesus Christ for what you need, to do this, and to be accepted in it? Do you *love* Jesus Christ; and contemplate with joy the rising prospects of His holy kingdom? Will you spend, and be spent in promoting his glory; in extending the honour of His name; and living not unto yourself, but unto Him that died for you and rose again? If so, you may hope that you are a *new* creature. And if a new creature, immortal glories await you. All things are yours; life, death, things present, things to come, all are yours. You are borne in everlasting arms; and when you put off the body, angels attend you—the gate of heaven opens—and *multitudes* that no man can number, shout your arrival. You are then with Christ, and see the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. You veil your face, cast down your crown, and, with saints and angels in heaven, cry, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

But where is he who is not a new creature, when *he* dies?—Sinking, and sinking, downward, and still farther downward, in the bottomless pit, for ever and ever! His heart can not endure—his hand can not be strong; for who can dwell with devouring fire? who *can* inherit everlasting burnings?

END OF VOL. I.

THE

NATIONAL PREACHER:

OR ORIGINAL

MONTHLY SERMONS

FROM

LIVING MINISTERS.

EDITED BY

AUSTIN DICKINSON, A.M.

NEW-YORK.

"It shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."—*Ezek.* xlvii. 12.

"Go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the Lord, in the ears of the people;

"It may be they will present their supplication before the Lord, and will return every one from his evil way."—*Jer.* xxxvi. 6, 7.

VOL. I.

FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING JUNE 1826.

NEW-YORK:

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1826–7.

PREFACE.

The Editor was led to undertake this Publication from having travelled extensively in the United States, and seen and heard much of the want of a preached Gospel. It seemed very desirable, that some simple method should be adopted, through which millions of fellow-sinners, going down to death, might be addressed, at once, on the great subject of salvation. The idea occurred that Ministers in the different States doubtless had Discourses, prepared in some of their happiest moments of thought and feeling, which, if concentrated in a Work of this kind, might reflect light on the desolate places, as well as on the churches of our land. It was thought, also, that this method of introducing Ministers of different sections of the church and of the nation to each other and to the Christian public, might be the means of promoting among good men a more general harmony of feeling and effort, and thus widening and strengthening that band of brotherhood which is to encircle the world. It seemed, moreover, that it might be desirable as an item of history, that there should be some National Work, from which men of other nations and languages, and of future ages, might have the opportunity of knowing what was the character of preaching in the United States, in this era of Christian enterprise, and of the Holy Spirit's gracious operation.

The encouragement received, during the first year, has exceeded the most sanguine expectations. So much so, that second and third editions of back Numbers have been called for; and, in all, upwards of one hundred thousand copies of Numbers have been published.

The Editor, however, is aware that the Work is comparatively but little known. Scattered as its Numbers have been

throughout our extended territory, they appear, among a population of twelve millions, but as drops in the ocean. The number of Subscribers does not yet average one to each Post-office in the United States. For a more extended usefulness among our rapidly increasing population, the Work must rely on the co-operation of the intelligent and the blessing of Heaven. The Editor will spare no reasonable effort or expense for rendering it worthy of introduction to every family. Upwards of forty Clergymen, in different parts of the United States and of five Christian denominations, most of whom are known to the public as Authors, are engaged to contribute Sermons for succeeding Volumes.

That the Work, from year to year, may grow in piety and vigour of thought—may continue to find favour with God and man—may find its way to the palaces of princes, as well as to the cottages of the poor—and may be instrumental in advancing all our benevolent institutions, and in impressing divine truth on millions yet unborn—is the ardent prayer of the

NEW-YORK, *May*, 1827. EDITOR.

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THE

NATIONAL PREACHER.

Go....Teach all Nations.....*Mat.* xxviii. 19.

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SERMONS XVII. & XVIII.

BY LYMAN BEECHER, D. D.

BOSTON, MASS.

THE NATIVE CHARACTER OF MAN.

I. JOHN, iv. 7.—*Every one that loveth, is born of God.*

THE love here spoken of, is holy love; which assimilates its subject to God. Every one that loveth, is born of God; that is, is a child of God, and bears his image. It is that love which is styled the fulfilling of the law, and which is the principle of evangelical obedience. It is religion. For every one that loveth, knoweth God: but to know God is life eternal; —is religion. This love does not belong to man by nature. It is never a quality of his heart, as a consequence of his birth; but is the result, in all cases, of a special divine interposition. For, if religion were the character first sustained by man, it would not be true that "every one that loveth is born of God."

It will be the object of this discourse, TO SHOW THAT MAN IS NOT RELIGIOUS BY NATURE. By religion we intend supreme love to God. By man we mean the entire race: and by the proposition, that man is not religious by nature, we mean, that there is nothing in him, of which religion is the natural effect or consequence, without a special divine interposition. When natural objects produce certain effects uniformly, we suppose that there is in them some cause for such results, which we call their nature; and if there be certain effects which they never produce, we say that it is not in their nature to produce them. When it is affirmed of man, therefore, that he is not religious by nature, we mean that there is nothing in his constitution of which religion is the result, without a special divine interposition; and that the first accountable character which he sustains is not a religious character. It will not be denied, that, if religion exists at all in man, it must be found in his heart; it must consist primarily in the state of his affections towards God—must include a predominant friendship for God, complacency in his character, delight in his service, approbation of his law, and resignation to the dispensations of his providence. With this view of the subject, we remark,

I. UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE AFFORDS EVIDENCE THAT MAN IS NOT RELIGIOUS BY NATURE.

Have religious affections found a place in your hearts, my hearers, from your earliest years? Do all of you, even now, experience them? Do you believe that you are religious, and that you have been from the beginning?

Are you prepared to die? Whatever you may be disposed to hope from the mercy of God, should you be called suddenly out of time, have you any evidence that you now possess, or ever have possessed, those affections of heart, which constitute a religious character, and are necessary to qualify for heaven? Are you conscious of supreme love to God? Do you love his word, his worship, his people? Do you maintain, habitually, secret prayer, and delight in the duty? Are you meek under injurious treatment, self-denied in temptation, and resigned to the will of God in affliction? This is religion. But is this the experience of any one in this assembly who has no reason to believe that he is born of God? If not, *you* certainly are not religious by nature. And if you present this outline of religious experience to your neighbour, you will find that he has nothing that answers to it in his first accountable state of feeling; and if you extend the inquiry through the world, you will find none who possess religious affections in the beginning.

This truth is confirmed also by the uniform experience of awakened sinners. From the day of Pentecost to the present, multitudes have experienced a deep anxiety for their souls. But universally the cause of this anxiety has been the discovery that they had no religion. They have perceived always that the law of God required of them affections of heart which they did not possess; and nothing has been found to aggravate their distress more than the simple direction, to love the Lord their God supremely, and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. They have always replied, "we cannot love, we cannot repent, we cannot *believe*;"—*a direct* confession that they have no religion. We are sensible that there are multitudes who are not thus awakened. But does their stupidity prove that they are religious? or discredit the consciousness of those who are awakened in respect to their own character? This consciousness then of all who are awakened, that they have no religion, is strong presumptive evidence that the fact is the same with respect to those who are not awakened.

To this we may add the testimony of those who furnish evidence of piety. Their testimony is, that their religious experience is a state of the affections, and is something *new*. We are not insensible that some persons profess religion who disclaim the existence of any great change in the state of their affections towards God; who claim that they have always from their earliest years loved God religiously. But it must be remembered, that the religion to which they lay claim, is not such religion as we have described. To this they make no pretensions; but ridicule it, often, as visionary and enthusiastic. We admit then, that men may have *such* religion as these persons profess without a change of heart. But we insist that the outline of religious experience which we have drawn is the religion of the Bible; and that all who are conscious of possessing it, do testify that it is a state of the affections, entirely new; and that this uniform testimony of the pious strengthens the presumption that religion is never the first character of man, but is always the result of a divine interposition.

II. THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD IS UTTERLY INCONSISTENT WITH THE SUPPOSITION OF NATIVE PIETY IN MAN.

If man is religious by nature, we should expect to witness the effects of early and universal piety in the history of the world. A world whose inhabitants all begin their accountable course religiously, could not surely furnish the same materials for history as a world whose early character is that of alienation from God. But does the history of the world confirm the supposition that man is religious by nature? Of those who, in adult age, afford credible evidence of piety, three fourths at least continue to do so: and the reasons would be stronger in favour of perseverance, if religion were the first character of all men. But do three fourths of the human race, or one fourth, afford evidence of piety from childhood upward? Is it not a rare event to find it at all among children? Among real Christians religion is a predominant principle of action. But does the history of the world show that religion has been the predominant principle of action in the human race? What is the origin of governments but necessity? Families cannot dwell in safety in this world without protection, and therefore associate in tribes; and tribes, wearied with the action and re-action of violence, coalesce for safety, and form the more extended communities of nations. Until these great associations were formed the world had no rest, and the arts of civilized life were scarcely known. But towards each other nations have displayed the same principles of ambition and violence which marked the conduct of individuals, and families, and tribes. The history of nations is the history of crimes and blood, and not of peace and good will to men. If men were religious by nature, we might expect that the knowledge and worship of the true God would be in every age universal. Instead of this, two thirds of the human family have been idolaters. Notwithstanding the invisible things of God are clearly seen by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; and notwithstanding all that God has done by revelation, and by miracle, and by his Spirit, two thirds of the human family have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to four-footed beasts and creeping things. Why is this? The evidence of His being is not obscure, and the divinity of idols is not supported by even specious evidence. The service of God is reasonable, pure, and benign; while that of idols is obscene, expensive, and bloody. Could a race, of which every individual commenced his accountable course under the influence of religion, have done thus?

III. It is the uniform testimony of the Bible, that men are not religious by nature.

1. This is strongly implied in the utter silence of the scriptures in respect to the piety of man by nature. If the first character which man sustains is a religious character, the scriptures could not have failed to recognise it. It would be a commanding fact which would extend its implications through every page, and modify every doctrine. Surely the descriptions of a religious and of an alienated world would not be the same. But we have examined, one by one, all the passages which speak of the heart of man, and there is not *one* which declares or implies that it is the subject of religion by nature. Whence this silence? It is one great object of the Bible to make

man acquainted with his own heart; and much is disclosed concerning its wickedness. Why is nothing said of its excellence, if religion be one of its native attributes? This silence, though only negative testimony, corroborates greatly the preceding evidence that man is not religious by nature.

2. The Bible ascribes to the natural heart of man a character utterly incompatible with the existence of religion. Before the flood, every imagination of man's heart is described as being evil only, continually; and after that event, as evil still, from his youth. This last declaration is made also as a reason why God in all future ages will no more curse the ground for man's sake,—affording testimony, not only that the heart of man was evil then from his youth, but that it would continue to be so through all ages;—unreclaimed by judgments however numerous or severe. Thirteen hundred years later the hearts of the sons of men are described as "full of evil." And still later, as "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The account which is given of the heart by our Saviour is as explicit and forcible as any of the preceding, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, blasphemies."

Upon this testimony of the Bible we remark, that the heart of man is never described as becoming thus wicked by any change from native goodness to evil since the fall of Adam. But when described as evangelically good, it is always done in terms which imply a change *from evil to goodness.*

Whenever men conduct wickedly, they are regarded as illustrating their own natural character—as obeying the dictates of their own hearts. But when they manifest religious affections, these are described *as the fruits of* the Spirit; and when they are given up to irreclaimable wickedness, they are given up to their own hearts' lust—to their foolish and darkened hearts—to vile affections through the lust of their own hearts—after their hard and impenitent hearts treasuring up wrath. How then stands the testimony of the Bible concerning the heart of man? It is silent as to the existence in it of religion: It is described in terms which preclude its existence. It is never represented as becoming bad by the loss of religion, or as being good, except as the effect of a divine interposition; and when abandoned to itself, it is always represented as being desperately wicked. Will it be alleged that this testimony is ancient, and that the heart of man may have changed for the better? To break the force of the testimony it must not only be possible that a change may have taken place, but it must be proved that it actually has taken place. Can such proof be found in the Bible? Is there a passage which asserts or implies that a universal change has taken place in the heart of man since the preceding descriptions of it were placed upon record?

Will it be alleged that Enoch, and Noah, and Moses, and Abraham, and others are spoken of as righteous, without any *mention* that they had experienced a change of heart? If it were so, it would not prove that no change had been experienced. The omission to recognise the change in the record, does not prove that it never happened. But it is implied of all these that they did experience a change of character. Faith implies a change of character, and is the gift of God. But by faith Abel offered a

more excellent sacrifice than Cain. By faith Enoch walked with God. By faith Abraham offered his son. By faith Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Will it be said that the preceding proof is contained in a few detached texts of Scripture? The texts are the testimony of God. They relate to the subject in question; and are direct and explicit. They are not detached from the context, to speak a meaning which they would not be authorized to speak in their connection. And as to their being detached in any other sense, what if they were all contained on one page? would that increase their perspicuity? Or what if they were multiplied an hundred fold? would that increase the evidence of divine testimony? How near together must the declarations of God be placed, and how often must they be repeated, to be entitled to credit? And what is the character of those to whom the Lord speaketh once, yea twice, and they regard it not?

3. The scriptural account of childhood and youth implies that mankind are not religious by nature. "Every imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." "Childhood and youth are vanity." "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child." "The wicked are estranged from the womb."

Could all this be said of childhood and youth, if the first accountable character they sustain were a religious character? Is every imagination of the pious evil? Is religion vanity, or folly, or estrangement from God? It must be remembered also that the preceding are not specific descriptions of some children and youth, but generic descriptions of the entire race of man in the early periods of life.

4. The generic descriptions of man contained in the Bible are such as preclude the supposition that he is religious by nature.

The term *man* includes all men of all nations. One nation is not man. All nations but one are not man. Every individual of the race is included; and whatever is declared of the *genus*, is declared concerning every individual as such. Is the lion ferocious? It is the character of all the race. Is the asp venomous? It is true of every asp. Is man born to trouble as the sparks fly upward? none then escape trouble. Does he die and waste away? there is no discharge then from that war.

When it is demanded, then, what is man that he should be clean, or he that is born of a woman that he should be righteous? it is a positive declaration that man is not clean—is not righteous—as a natural consequence of his birth. He possesses strength, and intelligence, and memory, and will, and affections, and appetites, and passions, as the result of a constitution with which he is born. But moral purity—righteousness—it is expressly declared, is not, like these, the consequence of natural birth.

The *world*, is another generic term by which the human race is characterized; and always in a manner which excludes the supposition of religion as being the first or natural character of man. We know that we (Christians) are of God; [that is, are born of God,] and the whole world lieth in wickedness. He (Christ) was in the world, and the world knew him not. O, righteous Father. the world hath not known thee. Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? If the world hate you, ye

know that it hated me before it hated you. I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them. If ye [my disciples] were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you. In these passages the world is contrasted with the pious; and both together, like the ancient terms, Jew and Gentile, include all men. There is no middle class which belongs neither to the pious nor to the world. But the world is described as ignorant of God; as alienated from God; as opposed to Jesus Christ, and his cause and people; as lying in wickedness; as dead in trespasses and sins. Is this the description of a race whose first accountable character is that of loyalty to God?

The term *flesh* is also a generic term, descriptive of man *in his native* state. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that, (or because) *he* also is *flesh*." His being an animal, furnished no reason, surely, why the Spirit of God should not strive with him. It is his moral nature, therefore, which is called flesh; and which is described in other places as alienated from God, and as lusting against the Spirit; furnishing an obvious reason why the Spirit might abandon man. In his discourse with Nicodemus, our Saviour speaks of the *flesh* as being that *moral* nature of man which is the consequence of his natural birth. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Our Saviour would not surely undertake to convince Nicodemus that the *animal body* is flesh. Flesh and spirit are therefore moral qualities contrasted: the one, forming the first character of man; the other, the result of a special interposition of the divine Spirit. The one disqualifying, and the other fitting a man for the kingdom of heaven. The one, that moral nature of man which renders regeneration indispensable: the other, that holy nature which is produced by the Spirit of God, when he renews the heart.

The flesh is in other places described as the comprehensive principle of moral evil in man, as the Spirit is described as being the efficient cause of all good. The works of the flesh are adultery, fornication, idolatry, hatred, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: But the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. The flesh comprehends the depravity which remains in the Christian after he is renewed. I know that in me, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. All my goodness is the result of regeneration; all my sin, the remains of my corrupt nature, called the flesh. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit lusteth against the flesh; and these two are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. The flesh, then, being the first character of man, and the comprehensive principle of evil in him, is so described as to preclude the possibility of religion as his first moral nature. For the carnal or fleshly mind is enmity against God. To be carnally minded, is death; and they that are in the flesh cannot please God; and they that live after the flesh shall die.

5. All those terms which divide the race of man into two great moral divisions: such as the righteous and the wicked, the holy and the unholy, the godly and the ungodly, the just and the unjust, imply that, not a reli-

gious, but a depraved character, is first sustained. That these terms of contrast include all men is certain. From the nature of free agency, and from the declaration of God, we know that neutrality cannot exist among accountable beings. Where men are qualified to obey, and love is required, neutrality would be disobedience. To regard God with indifference, compared with the creature, would be adding insult to rebellion. But such a state of mind is impossible. No man can serve two masters—nor be indifferent towards them. He will love or hate, obey or despise. All men, then, are holy or unholy, righteous or wicked. But which is the first character sustained by man? the holy or the unholy? Not the holy, but the unholy. There is no intimation in the Bible, that men become unholy by any change from good to bad; but Christians are continually described as becoming holy by a change from bad to good. They are begotten again. They are born of God. They are created anew. They are raised from the dead. The old man is put off, and the new man is put on. By all this variety of language it is implied, that the evil nature of man is first, and that his holy nature is the result of a special divine interposition.

6. The avowed object of the death of Christ decides that mankind are not religious by nature. It was rendered necessary by a character sustained by all men. And what was the character sustained which awakened the compassion of God, and called from heaven his only begotten Son to die for man? The character sustained was that of alienation from God. "Herein is the love of Christ commended, in that while we were yet ememies, he died for us. He suffered, the just for the unjust. "He died for all;" but it was because they "were all dead." In accordance with these representations, men are addressed by the gospel as *dead;* and are commanded to arise from the dead—as blind; and are commanded to see—as wicked; and are commanded to forsake their wicked way and turn to God. They are addressed as impenitent; and are called upon to repent; as in unbelief; and are commanded to believe. Every condition of pardon, proposed to men in the gospel, implies that they do not by nature possess it. The apostles, in their great commission, were directed to address every creature as impenitent: and Paul, in particular, was sent to the heathen, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the living God.

When men obey the gospel, they are described as renewed—as reconciled—as sustaining new affections. Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. The entire Christian character is described in the Bible as the work of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, faith, &c. But the Spirit operates only in the application of the redemption purchased by Christ, in carrying into effect the objects of his death. Before he renews the hearts of men, therefore, for whom Christ died, they are enemies, unjust, and dead in sin.

Those who reject the gospel, and perish, are represented as sustaining their own original character—as despising the riches of the goodness of God, and after their hard and impenitent heart, treasuring up wrath;—as

refusing when the Saviour called, and disregarding when he stretched out his hand. In short, men are described as becoming wicked, as a consequence of the fall of Adam, and religious, in consequence, and only as the consequence, of the interposition of Jesus Christ, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

7. It is declared in direct terms, expressly and unequivocally, that mankind are not religious in their first character. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. To know and to seek God implies religion. The investigation, therefore, was instituted to decide the question, whether there was an individual of the human race who was *religious* by nature.—Not whether any had returned, of those who had gone *astray*; for of such we read in the context, and throughout the Bible; but to ascertain whether there were any of the race of man who had never turned away from God, but remained, like Abdiel, "faithful among the faithless." The result of this omniscient scrutiny is, "They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good; no, not one." This is the declaration of God concerning the children of men: the result of an omniscient investigation, made expressly to decide whether the effects of the fall were universal, or whether any religious affection remained. The apostle Paul quotes this declaration of the Most High to *prove*, and he says that it does prove, both Jews and Gentiles, (terms which then included all men,) that they are all under sin. But to be under sin is to be under its dominion, and under condemnation: for he *proves the fact, that all are* under sin, to cut off the hope of justification by the deeds of the law, and to establish the doctrine of justification by faith. But to be under the dominion of sin, and in an *unjustified* condition is surely inconsistent with the existence of religion. To corroborate his argument, the apostle quotes the following passage from the Old Testament, and he quotes it, that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God.—"Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes." Now abate from this passage as much as is possible on the ground of metaphor, yet as it is quoted in a regular argument to stop every mouth, and to prove the whole world guilty before God, it does most certainly exclude the supposition of piety in those who are thus characterized. An open sepulchre is not the place of life: the poison of asps is not an emblem of health; and cursing and bitterness are not the fruits of the Spirit: nor are destruction and misery found in the ways of wisdom: nor can it ever be said of the truly pious, that they have no fear of God before their eyes. Language is of no use, and inspiration affords no evidence of truth, if these terms, applied to stop every mouth and prove the whole world guilty before God, do not prove that man in his first character is not religious.

8. There is also in the scriptures much inferential evidence on this sub-

ject. If man, in his first character, is religious, we should expect the fact would be implied in all the doctrines of the Bible, and if he is not religious, that it would also be implied. The difference is so great that the same doctrines cannot be true on either supposition. But to which of the two suppositions are the doctrines of the Bible accommodated? If man is not religious by nature, we should expect to find the necessity of a great moral change inculcated in the Bible. And do we not find it? "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." We should expect to find Christians described as those who had experienced this great change: and thus they are described as born of God, created anew, and passed from death unto life. As there can be no medium between religion and irreligion, we should expect the change would be sudden. And do not all the terms which describe it imply that it is sudden? It is a creation. Is there a point of time in the process of creation, in which a substance is neither in being nor out of being? It is a resurrection from the dead. Is there a moment in which the body is neither dead nor alive? If all men in the beginning withhold from God the homage of the heart, we should expect they would continue to do so, until reclaimed by a divine interposition. And thus we read of those who received Christ, that they were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, *but of God.*

If religion in man is the result of a divine interposition, we should expect to find it described as an act of grace which God might grant, or withhold, according to his good pleasure. And do we not read that he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy? If men are without religion, we should expect that they would be required to give the heart to God, and repent, and believe immediately; and that those who perished would be represented as self-destroyers. And is it not so? Repent—believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. And do not all who perish under the light of the gospel, perish by neglecting the great salvation? Turn ye, for why will ye die? I called and ye refused. This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light.

If men are not religious in their first character, we should expect to find all their actions charged with sinful defect. And in accordance with this expectation we read, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." "The ploughing of the wicked is sin." "So then they that are in the flesh can not please God." And "without faith it is impossible to please him."

In conclusion of the argument, I have only to add, that if the first accountable character of man is a religious character, this entire body of evidence must be reversed. All men must be conscious of supreme love to God in early life; and conviction of sin and a moral renovation must be confined to those who have lost their religion; while the great body of Christians must be supposed to be such without the consciousness of any change. At the same time the history of the world must be found to be a history of the fruits of piety,—idolatry itself being only an aberration of religious affection in children emulous to please their heavenly Father! It

should moreover be found written upon the unerring page, 'Every imagination of man's heart is *good* from his youth. The children of men *have not* gone out of the way. There is none who *doth not* understand and seek God, and do good, no, not one. The heart of the sons of men is full of *goodness*, out of which proceed *holy* thoughts, benevolent deeds, chastity, truth, and reverence for God. What therefore is man that he should be *wicked?* or he that is born of a woman that he should *not* be religious! How *lovely* and pure is man, who drinketh in *righteousness* like water. This is the *approbation* that *darkness* is come into the world, and men have loved *light* more than darkness, because their deeds are *good*. The whole world lieth in *righteousness*. He [Christ] was in the world and the world *knew* him. O righteous Father, the world hath *known* thee. The *friendship* of the world is *friendship with God*. If the world hath loved you, ye know that it loved *me* before it loved you. Be ye therefore *conformed* to the world, and be ye *not transformed* by any renewing of your mind. My Spirit shall *always* strive with man because *he* is spirit. For that which is born of the *flesh* is *spirit*. Marvel not that I say unto you ye *must not* be born again. For the works of the *flesh* are *love*, *joy*, *peace*, *faith*; and the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, faith. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth *every* good thing. Jesus Christ came to seek and to save those who were *not* lost; and he died *not* for his enemies—*not the just* for the unjust. The Gospel demands of men *no new character*, and all the doctrines of the Bible imply the early and universal piety of the human family.'

And now, who is prepared thus to reverse the whole testimony of *experience*, of *history*, and of the *Holy Scriptures?* In view of such overwhelming evidence to the contrary, will any man pretend to believe, that mankind are religious by nature?

If you had as much evidence that your water was poisoned, as you have that the heart of man by nature is not pious—would you drink it? Were the proof as clear that an assassin would meet you on turning a corner—would you go thither? Were it proved by as various and conclusive evidence that the fire was kindling on your dwelling—would you compose yourself to sleep? Will you then, in opposition to such evidence, still endeavour to persuade yourself of the native goodness of the human heart? If it were merely the body whose life was threatened by the deception, I might still cry earnestly to you to beware: but it is your *soul*, and your future and eternal well-being which you put in jeopardy by setting at naught such evidence. Without religion you cannot be admitted to heaven; and would not enjoy heaven if you were admitted. Without religion you can neither keep the law nor obey the gospel; and cannot escape the condemnation which rests upon transgression and unbelief. Will you then shut your eyes against light, and stop your ears against admonition? It is but for a moment, compared with eternity, that you can thus deceive yourself, and cry, Peace. The overwhelming consciousness must soon press upon your amazed heart, that you are without holiness, and cannot see the Lord; and that the harvest is past, the summer ended, and you not saved. There is no hope in your case while you think your heart is good, and feel no need of a divine

renovation. They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick: and Jesus Christ came to call, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. While the delusion prevails that you are rich, and stand in need of nothing, you will reject the counsel of Christ, to apply to him for eye-salve that you may see, and for white raiment to cover the shame of your nakedness. You will do nothing to save your own soul, and God will do nothing to save it, while, under the concentrated light of evidence, you remain wilfully ignorant of your malady, and wilfully negligent of your only remedy. Admit, then, the painful, alarming fact, that you have no religion, and without delay commence the inquiry what you must do to be saved, and thus escape the coming wrath, and lay hold on eternal life. All who are now in heaven were once like you without God, and without Christ, and without hope; and all who are now on earth, strangers and pilgrims seeking a better country, were once like you without religion. But He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in their hearts—and the same blessed Spirit is able and willing to enlighten you: but you must confess, and not cover your sin—you must come to the light, and not shun it—you must be convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come—you must be born again, or you cannot see the kingdom of God.

SERMON XVIII.

I. John, iv. 7.—*Every one that loveth, is born of God.*

The preceding discourse furnishes a scriptural account of human depravity. It is comprehended in the fact, that men have naturally no religion. If this has not been proved, we must abandon our confidence in the power of language to express ideas, and of evidence to prove matters of fact.

All which is admirable in intellect, or monitory in conscience, or comprehensive in knowledge, or refined in taste, or delicate in sensibility, or powerful in natural affection, may be found in man as the result of constitution, or the effect of intellectual and moral culture: but religion is not found, except as the result of a special divine interposition. The temple is beautiful, but it is a temple in ruins;—the divinity has departed, and the fire on the altar is extinct.

This depravity of man, implied in his destitution of religion, may be described briefly in the following particulars:—

1. It is *voluntary*.—A depraved nature is by many understood to mean, a nature excluding choice, and producing sin by an unavoidable necessity; as fountains of water pour fourth their streams, or trees produce their fruit, or animals propagate their kind. The mistake lies in supposing that the nature of matter and mind are the same; whereas they are entirely different. The nature of matter excludes perception, understanding, and choice; but the nature of mind includes them all. Neither a holy nor a depraved nature are *possible* without understanding, conscience, and choice. To say of an accountable creature, that he is depraved by nature, is only to say, that, rendered capable by his Maker of obedience, he disobeys from the

commencement of his accountability. To us it does not belong to say *when* accountability commences, and to what extent it exists in the early stages of life. This is the prerogative of the Almighty. Doubtless there is a time when man becomes accountable, and the law of God obligatory: And what we have proved is, that, whenever the time arrives that it becomes the duty of man to love God more than the creature, he does in fact love the creature more than God—does most freely and most wickedly set his affections on things below, and refuse to set them on things above, and that his depravity consists in this state of the affections. For this universal concurrence of man in preferring the creature to the Creator, there is doubtless some cause or reason: but it cannot be a cause of which disobedience is an involuntary and unavoidable result. Ability to *obey*, is indispensable to moral obligation; and the moment any cause should render love to God impossible, that moment the obligation to love would cease, and man could no more have a depraved nature, than any other animal. A depraved nature can no more exist without voluntary agency, and accountability, than a material nature can exist without solidity and extension. Whatever effect, therefore, the fall of man may have had on his race, it has not had the effect to render it impossible for man to love God religiously; and whatever may be the early constitution of man, there is *nothing in it*, and nothing withheld from it, which renders disobedience *unavoidable*, and obedience impossible. The first sin in every man is *free*, and might have been, and ought to have been avoided. At the time, whenever it is, that it first becomes the duty of man to be *religious*, he *refuses*, and *refuses in the* possession of such faculties as render religion a reasonable service, and him inexcusable, and justly punishable. The supreme love of the world is a matter of choice, formed under such circumstances, as that man might have chosen otherwise, and ought to have chosen otherwise, and is therefore exposed to punishment for this his voluntary and inexcusable disobedience. If, therefore, man is depraved by nature, it is a voluntary and accountable nature which is depraved, exercised in disobedience to the law of God. This is according to the Bible—"They have all *gone* aside,"—each man has been voluntary and active in his transgression. "They go astray as soon as they be born;" that is, in early life:—How early, so as to deserve punishment, God only knows.—"The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."—Every imagination or exercise of man's heart is evil. NATIVE DEPRAVITY, THEN, IS A STATE OF THE AFFECTIONS, IN A VOLUNTARY ACCOUNTABLE CREATURE, AT VARIANCE WITH DIVINE REQUIREMENT FROM THE BEGINNING OF ACCOUNTABILITY.

2. The depravity of man, implied in his destitution of religion, is *positive* depravity. Multitudes are willing to admit the fact, that they have no religion, who cannot be convinced that they are in a state of positive opposition to God. They are not conscious of opposition to God; they have a respect for his word and worship; and desire, they think, to be religious; and do many things with the hope of obtaining religion. But their transgression of the law and of the gospel, in refusing to love, repent, and believe, is voluntary and positive transgression. Not to love, repent, and believe,

when these duties are required, is positive disobedience, both to the law, and to the gospel. But, can a subject disobey the fundamental laws of the government under which he lives, and not be opposed to the government, and positively wicked? and can a man disobey in his heart the law of God and his gospel, and not be positively opposed to his Maker and Redeemer? The divine requirement is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and the man who has no religion refuses. The prohibition is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me;" but the man without religion, in defiance of this prohibition, does love the creature more than God. Is not this positive disobedience? Were a course of action persisted in, which God forbids, that would be counted positive disobedience. But the obedience of the heart is of all others the most appreciated, and the disobedience of the heart, of all others, regarded as most evil. Some have admitted that they do not love God supremely; but have insisted, that neither are they opposed to God. But this neutral state, if it were possible, would be adding insult to disobedience: for the command is, Thou shalt not be indifferent,—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." Now, what greater insult can be offered to the glorious God, than to refuse him our *preference*, and hang in equilibrio between the attractions of his infinite glory, and the influence of a perishing world? But neutrality between such objects as God and the world, is impossible. It is the nature of mind to choose, if not prevented by force, as much as it is of matter to be quiescent, if not moved by external powers. To prefer the world, or God, is the unavoidable result of free agency. Not to choose at all, is the attribute of a stock or a stone; but not of a rational, accountable being. Nor is there any practical indication of neutrality. For whatever reverence a man may feel for God, and whatever external respect he may pay to him: his own consciousness will decide, and his course of conduct will confirm the decision, that his affections are set on things below, and his sources of enjoyment are found, not in God, but in the things of time. Here then the great law of the kingdom of God is violated by all who are without religion. But can the fundamental laws of a government be violated without opposition to the government?

This view which we have given of the mind, as excluding neutrality, is confirmed by the Bible. "No man can serve two masters." "He that is not for me is against me." "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Hence, according to the Bible, men are holy or unholy, just or unjust, righteous or wicked, godly or ungodly, penitent or impenitent, believers or unbelievers, in a state of pardon or of condemnation. Therefore, the depravity of the man, who is destitute of religion, is positive depravity.

3. The depravity of man, which is implied in his destitution of religion, is *great*. Many suppose that although they are not religious, they are not *very* sinful. Provided they are amiable and consciencious in their moral deportment and useful in their lives, they cannot conceive that God should have much reason to be displeased with them. If they had been guilty of great actual crimes, they would be ready to admit that they were great sinners. But so long as the chief that can be said against them is, that they

have no religion, *this*, if it be a crime at all, is so common, and results, (as they think,) so much from unavoidable necessity, as almost to take away guilt, and leave a fair balance of good deeds and virtues to recommend them to God.

Far different from this, is Heaven's estimation of the guilt of being without religion. According to the Bible, whenever it becomes the duty of man to love God religiously, it is a duty of the highest obligation, the violation of which constitutes criminality of the highest order. The Being who demands love is worthy; the beings of whom he demands it are able to love; and the affections of his creatures belong to God. He claims them as his right, and declares that he is robbed when they are withheld. The highest good of his subjects for time and eternity, is found in giving *their hearts* to God, and ruin is the consequence of refusal. The obligation to love according to the law, is therefore superlatively great. It is also constant; so that the sinfulness of man is great in its nature and great in its amount; for it is the violation, constantly, of the highest possible obligation. And when this is done by those who are favoured with the gospel, their sin is immensely aggravated by the consideration of all that God has done to save them from death. They have perverted the means of grace, the mercies of his providence, and the judgments of his rod—they have despised the riches of his goodness, and the fierceness of his wrath. *They have* trodden under foot the blood of his Son, and done despite to the Spirit of grace:—and is all this criminality of a low degree and small amount, and so neutralised by human inability, as to be more than *balanced by amiable* dispositions and good actions? As God views the subject, those who do not love him, are sinful to an astonishing degree. "Hear, oh, heavens! and give ear oh, earth! for the Lord hath spoken it, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me!"

4. The depravity of man implied in his destitution of religion, is *entire*. Most men who admit that they have no religion, resist the conclusion, that they are therefore *entirely* depraved. But to decide the point, we have only to ascertain in what purity of heart or holiness consists, and whether a man who has no religion possesses it. Purity of heart or holiness consists in *conformity of heart to the law of God*, and includes, of course, *supreme love to God*. He, therefore, who has not supreme love to God, possesses no such affections of heart towards God as the law requires; and, so far as his heart is concerned, his depravity is entire. And as to actions, however correct in form they may be, they cannot, without holiness of heart, be regarded as obedience. The entireness of human depravity, therefore, consists in the constant voluntary refusal of man to love the Lord his God, with supreme complacency and good will.

The view we have taken of the character of man, as destitute of religion, illustrates both the nature and the necessity of *regeneration*. The language of the Bible is clear and forcible on this subject; but it is claimed by many, that as there is no such moral defect in man as lays a foundation for the necessity of a universal moral change; those passages which might seem to teach it must be restricted, and understood to teach only the necessity

of conversion from paganism, or Judaism, to Christianity. But the course of evidence, in these discourses, has disclosed a universal and appalling moral defect in man, which renders just such a change necessary as the language of the Bible indicates, according to its most direct and obvious import. To be without religion, is to be *dead in sin:* and to be so renewed by the Spirit as to love God supremely, is to be *raised from the dead*, and *born of God.* This is the change without which no man can see the kingdom of God.

This change, so indispensable, must also be a *perceptible* change. The attention to the means of grace and growing seriousness and solicitude which precede it, are progressive, as is the subsequent increase of holiness and evidence of the change. But the change itself from selfishness to holiness—from supreme love of the world, to supreme love of God—is not a progressive, but an instantaneous change. This accords with the representations of the Bible. It is a new creation, a resurrection from the dead, &c. I do not say that every Christian perceives, at the time, the moment of transition; or that, perceiving that a change of some kind has taken place, he perceives at once the evidence that it is a saving change. Not unfrequently days and weeks may pass away, before he will dare to hope: and sometimes the truly pious, from a misapprehension of their evidence, may for years be afflicted with doubts and fears concerning their state. But that the change is real, and great, and instantaneous, when a sinner, who has loved the world supremely, first sets his affections on things above, is self-evident. It would be ridiculous in the relations of life, to talk of unperceived affection for a father or mother, husband or wife; and equally absurd is the supposition of loving God more than the world, without the occurrence of any perceptible change.

There is, I am aware, a general feeling, that men are not quite prepared to die without becoming better. But this emendation, it is thought by many, is to be attained gradually, by moral culture, and imperceptibly, as the grass grows by rain and sunshine. Any great solicitude, or deep conviction of sin, or sudden peace and joy, it is supposed, are not to be expected, but deprecated as delusion. And some, and even ministers, warn their friends not to be alarmed, and not to expect any sudden and happy change in their views and affections. But if there be with every man a time when he is not religious, there must be a time when he becomes religious. Even were religion the result of natural principles duly cultivated, there must be a time when cultivation has produced its results. If it were produced by the cultivation of some low degrees of goodness in man; still there must be a time when it reaches to the degree of goodness which constitutes religion. Or if, as the scriptures teach, there is no religion in the heart of man by nature, then there must be a moment of time when its existence in the heart begins. For that which once had no existence, and comes into being, must have a beginning. There is no medium between existence and non-existence, in matter, mind, or morals; no moment in which a thing is neither created nor uncreated, neither in existence nor out of existence.

It is absurd to speak of love as in a process of gradual formation: for what is half-formed love, repentance, faith, or any other trait of Christian

character? How long must culture operate to produce the simple and indivisible emotion of love to God? And if the obedience of love must be gradual, and cannot be instantaneous, how is it that the requirements of Heaven should so disregard this constitution of mind, as to command man immediately to love and repent, and warn him of growing hardness of heart as the consequence of delay? As all men, then, are destitute of religion by nature, its commencement in the soul is at all times sudden. There is a moment when he who loved the world more than God begins to love God more than the world.

You have now before you the evidence that men are not religious by nature; and that this destitution implies the universal and entire depravity of man, and the necessity of a great and sudden change in the affections, by the special influence of the Holy Spirit. This is not a matter of abstract speculation, of no practical utility. Our being and accountability are eternal, and the law of God, which is the rule of obligation, is eternal. Heaven is a religious world, and the present is our state, and our only state of probation. Here in this morning of our being the elements are formed of an immutable character in the eternal state: and if that which is first formed is one that unfits us for heaven, and fits us for destruction, can we too soon or too clearly perceive it, or too deeply feel it, or too earnestly strive to be conformed in our affections to the requirements of the Gospel, to the conditions of pardon, and to the exigencies of the heavenly state? What then is the improvement which you will make of these discourses, whose hearts tell you that you have no religion? *Will you say, that these* are *hard sayings*, and that you do not like such doctrine? But is it therefore untrue, because it is painful? And will you, dare you, in the presence of such evidence, reject it in favour of the dictates of mere inclination! Will you apply to such as endeavour to explain away this evidence, and speak to you smooth things, and prophesy deceits? Beware! others before have done this, and "God sent them strong delusions, that they might believe a lie and be damned, because they had no pleasure in the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." You may persuade yourself, or be persuaded, that a change of heart is not necessary to prepare you for death and heaven, and yet,

> "This fearful truth will still remain,
> The sinner must be born again,
> Or drink the wrath of God."

Do you then at length inquire what you must do to be saved? The answer is plain—Repent, and you shall be forgiven; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. Neglect then the subject no longer. Resolve that from this time you will make the salvation of your soul your first and great concern. Break off your alliance with vain persons and diverting amusements: read your Bible daily and earnestly alone; and lift up your cry to God, in earnest supplication for mercy; plead guilty, and cry for pardon through a Redeemer's blood.

Nott's Testimony in favour of Judson.

A

LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

REV. ENOCH POND,

Of Ward, (Mass.)

ON THE

Insinuations and Charges

CONTAINED IN HIS

REPLY

TO

MR. JUDSON'S SERMON ON BAPTISM.

BY REV. SAMUEL NOTT, JUN.
Late Missionary to India.

BOSTON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY LINCOLN & EDMANDS,
No. 53 Cornhill.

1819.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Author of the following vindication of Mr. Judson, is well known to the public as one of the five Missionaries who sailed to India under the patronage of the Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in the year 1812, and therefore must be supposed to be better acquainted with many of the circumstances to which he alludes, than any other person now in this country. The testimonies he has here presented were received May 3d, prefaced by the following Letter.

New-York, April 22, 1819.

Rev. and dear Sir,

When I began the accompanying letter, it was with the intention of sending it immediately in manuscript to Mr. Pond. But as I believe it contains testimony, which ought to be in the hands of Mr. Judson's friends without delay, I transmit it to you, with the desire that you will make the use of it which in your opinion will most subserve the reputation of our worthy friend and brother. I regret that I did not receive Mr. Pond's book earlier, and that owing to many avocations, and indifferent health, I have been obliged to detain this Letter much longer than I could have wished.

I remain, Rev. and dear Sir, very respectfully, yours,

SAMUEL NOTT, Jun.

Rev. Dr. Baldwin.

It affords us much satisfaction to be able to state that no influence has been used by us to procure from Mr. Nott the following testimonies and remarks. They were altogether unsolicited and unexpected on our part. Not the most distant intimation of his design had been given to us till we received the letter in manuscript.

We have not been ignorant of the attempts of Mr. Pond to injure the moral character of Mr. Judson. But with the knowledge we had of his character, both as a christian and

a minister, and also of the circumstances which attended his departure to India, and his change of sentiment on the subject of Baptism, we have never believed that the insinuations and charges of Mr. Pond were well founded.

Introduced as they are in the beginning of a pamphlet on a subject purely controversial, designed without doubt to weaken the confidence of the public in the character of him whose arguments were about to be considered; of him who had been for years enduring the privations and labours of a faithful missionary in a foreign land; of him from whom it was known no answer could be received in less than 12 months; of him to whom the whole case might and ought to have been first privately referred, according to the rules of Christ, we will not say what want of christian candour and brotherly love they betray in the character of Mr. Pond; what consciousness of strength in the arguments of his opponent, and of his own inability to meet and refute them upon fair grounds.

Mr. Nott is deserving of the thanks of the Christian Public, for the candour, and love of truth, evinced in his voluntary effort, to wipe away the injuries which had been heaped upon the character of a faithful servant of Christ. Rising superior to that narrowness of mind, which can feel no interest in the reputation of a man, however excellent, who may have embraced a communion different from his own, he has been constrained by a sense of duty, no less than by feelings of love and friendship, to furnish these ample testimonies in favour of his absent brother.

THOMAS BALDWIN,
DANIEL SHARP,
JAMES M. WINCHELL.

Boston, May 8, 1819.

To the Rev. Enoch Pond.

SIR,

I RECEIVED, a short time since, by the kindness of a friend in Massachusetts, your *Reply* to Rev. Adoniram Judson's Sermon on the Subject of Baptism. I had heard some account of your "Preliminary Observations," and it was for the sake of them that I requested my friend to procure the pamphlet for me. I have some remarks to make upon those observations, to which as the testimony of an intimate friend of Mr. Judson, who was intimately acquainted with all the circumstances of his change of sentiment, I request your candid and careful attention.

In your second paragraph, you notice Mr. Judson's own history of the progress of his change of sentiment, and make the suggestion that his pretensions on that subject are not sincere.

As to the first point in the history, viz. "That he began to doubt the truth of his former sentiments during his voyage to India," I have nothing to say, except, that no evidence appearing to the contrary, the presumption from his subsequent change is, that he did. On the second, viz. "That he became an established convert to the peculiarities of the Baptist faith, before he communicated the exercises of his mind to any of the Baptist denomination;" I observe, that such were my own convictions at the time, resulting I believe, equally from Mr. Judson's own observations, and from those of the brethren at Serampore.

Your third paragraph seems to suggest the probability that Mr. Judson's change of sentiment was insincere, because he has advanced nothing new—no arguments which he had not previously examined and pronounced unsound. In noticing this suggestion, I do not forget that I address you principally as a witness of facts which fell under my own observation; but I cannot forbear to ask, Is every honest change of sentiments made by the discovery of *new* arguments? Have you not often found your own sentiments change by new views of *old* arguments, and have you not all your life witnessed similar changes in others? Would you, in fine, consider it as any evidence of a Baptist's dishonesty should he turn from his error, simply influenced by the impression of arguments which he thought he had answered satisfactorily before? No, Sir; *this* would be the triumph of reason over prejudice, of truth over error.

In the next paragraph, the former part of which I do not clearly understand, you ask, "At a period when his own circumstances were greatly perplexed, and when liable to imagine that some new expedient might improve them; how came he to fall in so exactly with those Missionaries, among whom* Providence had for a few days thrown him, and who were now prosperously established and engaged in their benevolent work?" Why did he fall in with their sentiments? Because his own sentiments altered—because he *did* fall in with them—because by long, laborious, solemn and prayerful study, he came to the conclusion, that *their* sentiments were agreeable to the word of God, and that *ours* were not. Yes, Sir, from the time of my arrival in Calcutta, I knew intimately the labor of his mind, and I declare my full conviction, that he gave the subject a most thorough and serious examination, studying carefully the scriptures and

* Mr. Judson did not live with the Missionaries at Serampore, as seems to be here intimated, but at Calcutta.

all the Authors he could find on the subject—that he studied it religiously, and that in all his conversation upon it, he seemed under a solemn and deep religious impression. Indeed, Sir, he manifested a real enthusiasm upon it. It occupied his whole mind. Should I blame him at all, it would not be for sinister motives and insincere professions, but for suffering his mind to lose in some measure the calmness and coolness desirable in the consideration of argument. But be that as it may, if I ever beheld evidence of piety in any man, I beheld it then in him, and can most readily believe that he said sincerely, "If there ever was an action performed from one single motive, unblended with any minor consideration, my baptism was an action of this description."

The question upon which I have been remarking, contains the suggestion, that the prospect of a more easy settlement in India, might have been the governing motive of his mind. That he appeared to be strongly influenced by other motives, inconsistent with this supposition, is the testimony which I have given, and which I consider as an ample answer to the suggestion. The evidence however has not yet been produced in proof that he saw, or had reason to see the prospect which is supposed to have governed his mind. All subsequent events go to prove that there was no such prospect.

In the next paragraph you say, "Another remarkable circumstance respecting Mr. Judson's change, is the concealment of his views from his Missionary Brethren." In evidence of the fact, you refer the reader to the report of the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions for the year 1813. The expressions of the report are more guarded than your own, and certainly do not justify the unqualified assertion, *that Mr. Judson concealed his views from his Missionary Brethren.* The words of the report are the following; "Mr. Newell, however, who was his com-

panion on the passage to Calcutta, and after his arrival there, until within about three weeks of the date of this note,* appears to have left him without any knowledge of his change. His other Brethren also, who were at Calcutta, when he went from that place to Serampore on the 2[illegible]th August, appear to have been unapprised of the object of his visit there, and to have received their first intelligence on the subject two days afterwards from Dr. Marshman." The committee certainly do not here make an unqualified assertion, that Mr. Judson *concealed his views from his brethren*, but assert only their want of evidence that he did communicate them, or at most, only their own inference that he *did not*. Nothing could have been more unfortunate than an unqualified assertion, and the members of the committee were too judicious to assert a positive fact upon merely negative evidence: I say negative evidence, for I am sure that they could have had no *positive* evidence, from honest witnesses, in proof of what was not true.

I will now, Sir, as fully as I can recollect, at an interval of nearly seven years, state facts which clear Mr. Judson from your very serious charge, and which will serve to explain likewise the extract from the report of the Board, upon which that charge is founded.

I have no recollection of ever having heard Mr. Newell intimate, that he was not acquainted with the labour of Mr. Judson's mind on the subject of baptism before he left Calcutta. On the contrary, I have the fullest impression, without distinctly recollecting any particular conversation, that he was acquainted with it, and heard of his change without surprise. That he was ignorant of his *change* on leaving Calcutta, however, I have not the slightest doubt, as at that time no change had taken place. His mind still remained inquiring and undecided.

* Mr. Judson's note to the Missionaries at Serampore, requesting Baptism.

In regard to my own intercourse with Mr. Judson, I testify, that on the day of my arrival in Calcutta, and within three hours after my arrival, he opened to me his whole mind—informed me that he was examining the subject of Baptism, and that as far as he could then see, the result would be that he should become a decided Baptist. This was the 8th of August. On the 23d of August, four days before the date of Mr. Judson's note to the missionaries at Serampore, I made, as I find by recurring to the manuscript, the following observation in my own private journal, viz. "I have a new trial since my arrival here, in the decision of brother Judson in favour of the Baptists." Thus, Sir, I give you my testimony from recollection, that Mr. Judson communicated to me his views as early as possible, and a *record* of my *knowledge* of his *change* of sentiment four days before that change was communicated to the missionaries at Serampore.

How soon Mr. Judson communicated his views to my brethren Hall and Rice, I do not know; though I have no recollection of any reserve on his part. One fact, however, I do distinctly recollect, which sets the question of Mr. Judson's concealment from them at rest. When they with myself were deliberating concerning our letter to Dr. Worcester, dated August 21st, six days before the communication to the missionaries at Serampore, the subject of Mr. Judson's state of mind was introduced by brother Hall, and became the subject of conversation. In regard to this charge of concealment, it may be in point to observe, that I remember no mystery or charge of mystery at Calcutta, and that the first suggestion of it comes from the report.

You intimate in your note that Mr. Judson went to Serampore for the purpose of being immersed. He did not go to be immersed; but left his wife behind him, who was immersed with him at Calcutta on the seventh of September.

But, though Mr. Judson's brethren knew the state of his mind previously to his departure for Serampore, it *is true* that he left Calcutta to go there without informing his brethren of the object of his visit. What was the reason of this omission I have no distinct recollection, but presume it resulted from circumstances which I am about to mention. That it could have been from no desire or design of concealment, I feel sure from the distinct recollection of the fact, that on my calling on Mrs. Judson, on the very day* of Mr. Judson's departure for the purpose of opening his mind to the Baptist missionaries, *she* informed me of her own accord, and without reserve, that he had gone for that purpose, and expressed the pain they both felt in doing an act which might dissolve their connection with the mission.

It has, I believe, appeared that Mr. Judson's brethren were previously acquainted with the *full* extent of his change of sentiment. His only omission, therefore, was that of informing them of the particular fact that he was about to communicate his sentiments and designs to the missionaries at Serampore. Even this omission may seem strange to those who suppose that Mr. Judson was living in the same house with his brethren. The truth is, that *they* lived in the suburbs of Calcutta, at two miles distance from the river. Mr. Judson did not live more than a quarter of a mile from the river, and at least two miles from his brethren. Now, as I hinted before, I have no distinct recollection of the reasons of Mr. Judson's omission, but I presume that on the occurrence of an opportunity to go to Serampore, by the return of the mission boat, Mr. Judson did not find it convenient to visit and inform his brethren of his designs, and probably could not do it without missing the opportunity. This probably he did not think it necessary to do, as his brethren knew already all that he could tell

* My recollection does not enable me to say that this was or was not the 27th of August. It was about that time, and the very day that Mr. Judson went to Serampore for the specified purpose.

them, except, that the time had now come for the promulgation of his change.

Whence the idea arose, that Mr. Judson *concealed* his views from his missionary brethren, I am utterly at a loss to conceive. Some of us may have said, without any thought of the unfortunate inferences to which we were giving occasion, that Dr. Marshman had informed us that Mr. Judson had addressed him and his brethren a letter announcing his change of sentiment. Very likely it might have been the case that the first intimation that the expected fact *had* taken place, came from Dr. Marshman. If it were so, the conclusion does not follow, that *that* intimation came to us, or any of us, while in ignorance of Mr. Judson's sentiments and designs.

The facts which I have stated, Sir, deserve to be known. Mr. Judson ought not to suffer from the inferences made from the inferences of those who had no knowledge, and but a partial information of the facts. Had the missionaries thought it necessary, they might have entered into a detail of facts at the first. But seeing no symptoms of sinister motives and insincere professions, they could see no cause for explaining what needed no explanation.

I feel it due to Mr. Judson, sir, before I close, to notice the "disclosure of facts, which for the honour of the Christian ministry, and the Christian name," you become, *with so much reluctance*, the instrument of spreading before the world.

That Mr. Judson's proceedings previously to his leaving this country were in some points unsatisfactory to the Board of Commissioners and the Committee, and that Mr. Judson was informed of this, formally and solemnly, I shall not dispute. I was present at Worcester, and was a witness of the facts there, upon a comparison of which, with Mr. Judson's own declarations, you found (very reluctantly perhaps) without hesitation, without

an intimation of uncertainty, a charge which ruins his character, not only as a Minister and a Christian, but as a man of integrity and honour. I am not intimate with cases of political slander, but I confess I should scarcely expect to find in the virulence and unfairness of party feeling, a grosser instance of unjust and uncharitable construction.

But I proceed to examine the documents which you produce, and to state the views of them which I think just, and charitable, and reasonable. Mr. Judson says, in a letter to the Rev. Dr. Baldwin, "The Board of Commissioners never gave me a reprimand—I never had the most distant idea that the Board thought me deserving a reprimand." To prove that in this unequivocal declaration, Mr. Judson is guilty of "a denial of the truth," you bring, in evidence, the official testimony of the Corresponding Secretary. "It was (on a certain occasion) *resolved*, that he (Mr. J.) should be in a formal and solemn manner admonished. The admonition was accordingly administered in presence of the Board." Indeed, Sir, the charge of a denial of the truth is the most unfortunate and illy supported charge you could have made, and I must consider it as a sad evidence of a general want of candor, if it can have made upon the public mind any great impression.

In all probability, the Rev. Secretary gave in his official letter the exact words of the resolution of the Board upon which Mr. Judson was addressed in the meeting of the Board at Worcester, viz. "It *was resolved* that he should be in a formal and solemn manner admonished." If those be the words of the resolution, (as they undoubtedly should be in an official testimony, touching the veracity of any man, and especially of a minister of the gospel) the next sentence doubtless expresses the fact which actually took place; viz. "The *admonition* was accordingly administered in the presence of the Board." Again, if such were the resolution of the

Board, the probability is, that when Mr. Judson was called upon, that the resolution might go into effect, he was *informed* that the Board *had resolved* that he should *be admonished*, and that such observations were then made as expressed formally and solemnly what they considered as culpable in his proceedings.

After a few years have elapsed of vicissitude, and toil, and anxiety, quite sufficient to have obliterated from his mind many of the particulars of this transaction, Mr. Judson is informed of a report, that "shortly before he sailed, he received a reprimand from the Board, which so offended him, that he resolved to have no more to do with them, and in no way could he escape so honourably as by becoming a Baptist." Conscious (as I believe he was) of no feeling of resentment, for any disapprobation of the Board, and sure that he never had deserved or received a reprimand, he replies with the utmost confidence, that the Board never gave him a *reprimand*, and that he had not the most distant idea that the Board thought him deserving a *reprimand*. Fearless of contradiction, he appeals to any of the members of the Board. The appeal is made to the official organ of the Board. The appeal is submitted for consideration and advisement to the Committee of the Board, and the reply, at best, is, *that it was resolved* he should be *admonished*:—and *he was admonished*. The official reply is an acquittal, and not a condemnation. Every body knows that admonition is a word of much less severity than reprimand. He might, or he might not have recollected all the circumstances. If he did, he felt he was admonished—he did not feel that he was reprimanded—had no idea that the *Board* thought him deserving a *reprimand*. He did not suppose that they attached to his conduct the guilt which that word implies. Nay, Sir, when you received Dr. Worcester's Letter, did you not yourself feel that the testimony failed in the main point—viz. in proving Mr. J. guilty of a "denial of the truth?" I ask this

question with the more confidence, because I think I see internal evidence that you felt so. For you say in a note, "In another communication from the Rev. Secretary, he says, 'Mr. Judson was admonished and reprimanded in solemn form.'" But why did the Secretary write you another communication besides his *official* one? The obvious explanation is, you observed that *admonition* was not the opposite of *reprimand*, and that even on the evidence of Dr. Worcester's Letter, Mr. J.'s veracity was unimpeached. So I presume you wrote another Letter in order to obtain a decided opposition in the two declarations. I shall now proceed to examine this supplementary testimony.

By using the two words admonished and reprimanded, the idea is certainly conveyed that both those words *may be* considered as applicable to the fact. But by having used the word *admonished*, and the word admonished *only*, in the *official* communication, it is decidedly implied, that *admonished* was the original word, and that by itself, alone, *it* conveys the true meaning: while the use of *both* in the latter communication implies that the word reprimanded by itself, alone, would *not* convey the true meaning—would not convey the true representation of the fact. The very worst view therefore which can be taken of the case, even upon the supplementary testimony is, that those who looked upon Mr. Judson's conduct with the severest eye, might feel themselves justified in adding the word reprimanded to the word admonished, though not in using the former word alone; while every one must conclude that those who should take the mildest view, would never think of calling it a *reprimand* at all. Shall then Mr. Judson be convicted of a "denial of the truth," because he says he never was reprimanded, and never knew that the Board thought him deserving a *reprimand?*

As I was a witness of the facts at Worcester, it may be proper to observe, that as far as I recollect either the

subjects of blame or the nature of the censure, that I should consider the word *admonished* the appropriate word, (though whether even that word were used, I am not certain from recollection) and that the word *reprimanded* is exceedingly inappropriate to the offences which the Board were disposed to blame. For admitting all the faultiness which the Board attached to them at the time, they were to be imputed to no *criminal* intentions, but to misguided and hasty zeal in a glorious cause.

But the question on which Mr. Judson's veracity should rest, is not whether Dr. Worcester or myself, or any other witness of the facts, thinks the word *reprimanded* appropriate, but whether that were at the time, the *distinct* denomination given to the communication of the Board. The question is, Sir, must Mr. J. *inevitably* have understood and remembered that communication as a distinct and decisive reprimand? Now, Sir, how very far is the testimony you have adduced from proving that it was called a reprimand, and that Mr. Judson [illegible]ve considered it *inevitably* as a reprimand! The [illegible]lity is, Sir, that the Board, and not himself, took [illegible]t serious view of his case, and that he, instead of [illegible] harsher name to their doings, would be likely [illegible] to give a much milder one. For I doubt not [illegible] some points he condemned his own proceed- [illegible] was conscious of no other motive than a desire [illegible]te the cause in which he had engaged. In order [illegible] clear case, you enter into an explanation of [illegible] admonition. But, Sir, is Mr. J. to be proved [illegible] "a denial of the truth," by *your* definition of [illegible] Do your readers need a *definition* that *they* [illegible] nvinced of Mr. J.'s guilt? Will you, Sir, de- [illegible] uilty by fixing upon the severer alternative of [illegible]ch you acknowledge to be ambiguous? Sir, [illegible]ng easy work of ruining the character of the [illegible] the gospel!

Allow me, Sir, in closing this Letter, to press upon your consideration Mr. J.'s claims to a more kind and candid treatment than he has received at your hands. Many years has he been separated from his friends and countrymen, an exile for the sake of the gospel among a barbarous people. He has experienced abundantly the anxieties and trials, the deprivations and sufferings of a Missionary of Christ. He has laboured faithfully and steadfastly for his Master, and has meekly borne reproach for doing what he considered as his duty. He has shown himself worthy of our respect and admiration, and we should do all we can to encourage and strengthen him; we should not be hasty to reproach him. Why renounce with the faithful Missionary that candour of construction which you would not fail to use in the case of your meanest neighbour? Why convert the whispers of suspicion, into clamorous facts, and aim a deadly blow at his character and usefulness?

Excuse these observations: I have too often held sweet counsel with my absent friend, not to feel deeply interested in a cause which touches the apple of his eye.

SAMUEL NOTT, Jun.

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